A

Philosophicall

ESSAY

Towards an Eviction of

The { Being and Attributes of God.
Immortality of the souls of men.
Truth and Authority of Scripture.

TOGETHER

With an Index of the Heads of every particular Part.

The Fifth Edition

Write formerly by SETH now Lord Bishop of *Salisbury*.

OXFORD,

Printed by *Leonard Lichfield*, and are to be sold by *Thomas Bartlet*, 1677.

Philosophicall

ESSAY

towards an Evidence of

TOGETHER

With an Index of the Heads

of every particular Part.

The Fifth Edition

Written formerly by S^R T. H now

Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

OXFORD,

Printed by Leonard Lichfield, and are to

be Sold by Thomas Bartlet, 1677.

To the
READER.

THE *Authour of this Book although he had never ſuffered it to be publiſhed, had he not been aſſured that it is not (for the main) much liable to juſt exception, and although he hath no further rare of the reception and entertainment of it, then the conſequence of it may deſerve (whereof the Reader and not himſelf muſt be the Judge.) And ſo he is not moved by the common paſſions of ſuch as uſe to make Epiſtles and Prefaces, to their Readers, yet ſome thing although but for cuſtome only he was willing to premiſe, and to acquaint the Reader with thus much by way of Apology for himſelf.*

That this was written divers years ſince without any purpoſe of ever letting it go abroad, that the chief end of

rational knowledge an account of the grounds of his own belief, and to that end, to lay in order his ſcattered notions concerning that ſubject; and this he intends as an Apology for the homelineſſe of the ſtile.

That at the ſame time when this was written, it was alſo delivered in a private courſe of religious exerciſe and that will be the excuſe for ſuch repetitions as might otherwiſe ſeem ill-favoured in the ſeverall Sections of it.

That at the time of his compoſing it, he was deſtitute of the aſſiſtance of his Books, which is one cauſe that it is not adorn'd with Teſtimonies and citations out of Authours, but comes out naked, being ſupported only by the order and plainneſs of reaſon that it truſts to.

That ſince the compoſing of this, he knows that divers Books of the ſame Argument have been written by men farr more knowing then himſelf, but that he hath not read any of them, nor knows whether he does agree with them

or

or not, which abſtinence hath been cauſed partly for that he is himſelf ſatisfied by what is here delivered, and partly for that he had no leiſure or mind to alter this which he had done, though poſſibly it might be for the better.

That whereas he ſpeaks of Epicures, Machiavelians *and the like, he makes uſe of thoſe names only in popular way as they are names of Characters well known amongſt us, and that he intends not to traduce thoſe Authours, or caſt any contumely upon them.*

Laſtly, He muſt needs acknowledge, that before the Edition of this he hath ſeen M. H. *his* Leviathan, *and other Books of his, wherein that which is in this Treatiſe intended as the main Foundation whereon the ſecond Diſcourſe* (Of the Souls Immortality) *inſiſts is ſaid to imply a contradiction,* viz. That there are any ſuch things as Immateriall or incorporeall ſubſtances. *Upon which occaſion he thought good only to ſay, that he hath a very great*

great respect and a very high esteem for that worthy Gentleman, but he must ingenously ackonwledge that a great proportion of it is founded upon a belief and expectation concerning him, a belief of much knowledg in him, and an expectation of those Philosophicall and Mathematicall works, which he hath undertaken; and not so much upon what he hath yet published to the world, and that he doth not see reason from thence to recede from any thing upon his Authority, although he shall avouch his discourse to proceed Mathematically. That he is sure he hath much injured the Mathematicks, and the very name of demonstration, by bestowing it upon some his discourses, which are exceeding short of that evidence and truth which is required to make a discourse able to bear that reputation.

That in this case M. H. *is only a negative witness, and his meaning in denying incorporal substances, can rationally import no more but this, That he*

he himself hath not an apprehension of of any such beings, and that his cogitation (as to the simple object of it) hath never risen beyond imagination, or the first apprehension of bodies performed in the brain; but imagine that no man hath an apprehension of the God-head, because he may not perhaps think of him so much as strip off the corporeal circumstances wherewith he doth use to fancy him; Or to conclude every man under the sentence of being non-sensicall, whosoever have spoken or written of incorporeal substances, he doth conceive to be things not to be made good by the Anahority of M. Hobs.

That whereas very many men do professe an apprehension of such beings, and he in the meantime professes this to be impossible, this Authour is hard put to it to excuse this from much incivility, and conceives the import of it to amount to thus much, that he conceives himself in the highest and ut most bound

of

of humane apprehenſion, and that his reaſon is the meaſure of truth, and that what he ſees not is inviſible: I conceive the caſe in this to be alike, as if whileſt two men are looking at Jupiter, *one with his naked eyes, the other with a Teleſcope, the former ſhould avow that* Jupiter *had no attendants, and that it were impoſſible he ſhould have any: the reaſon why* M. H. *denies thoſe beings whileſt other men apprehend them, is for that he lookes at them with his Fancy, they with their mind.*

Many more things he had to ſay for himſelf, but he underſtands not fully the uſe or benefit of Apologies.

The Contents.

PART. I.

SECT. I.

Preface.

SECT. II.

OF the design and definition of Religion, the prejudices and pretences against the Christian, the sum of what is in controversie deduced to three Questions

1. *Of the* { *Being* and *Attributes* } *of God.*
2. *Of the Immortallity of the souls of men.*
3. *Of the Authority of Scriptures.*

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of the being of God evicted by way of Demonstration from the Creatures. p. 11.

SECT. IV.

Of the Attributes of God, those likewise evicted from the Creatures. p. 17.

PART II.

SECT I.

A Proposal of the Argument for the Imortality of the Soul, and a manifestation of the major proposition, that incorporeall substances are immortal. p. 33.

SECT. II.

A Proof of this Proposition, that the Souls of men are incorporeall substances, by comparing the affections of

of bodies with thoſe ſouls p. 38.

SECT. III.

A further proof of it by the generall way of apprehenſion. p. 43.

SECT. IV.

The ſame further demonſtrated from the ſeverall acts of the Soul, from ſimple apprehenſions. p. 51.

SECT. V.

From Judgment and Diſcourſe p. 58.

SECT. VI.

An Application of the former Propoſitions to the inference of a Religion in generall, and a propoſal of the third in order to the Chriſtian. p. 67.

PART.

PART. III.

Concerning the Truth and Authority of our Scripture.

SECT. I.

Petitions and Cautions premiſed to the Queſtion.

SECT. II.

The Aſſertion reſolved into two Propoſitions, the former undertaken, that whoſoever believes the Hiſtoricall part of the Scripture muſt believe the Doctrinall. p. 81.

SECT.

SECT. III.

The kinds and degrees of the causes of Historical Faith in general. p. 89

SECT. IV.

An Application of those generall grounds to the History of the New Testament, and proof of this assertion, That there is as great reason to believe the New Testament, as to believe any other History in the world. p. 97.

SECT. V.

That there is much greater reason to believe the History of the New Testament, then any other History. p. 206.

SECT. VI.

That the old Testament is the word of God. A proposall of three severall

all assertions, whereby it is concluded.

SECT. VII.

The first Assertion proved, That the Books of the Old Testament which we now receive, are the same which the Jews doe now receive. p. 124.

SECT. VIII.

That the Books, which the Jews doe now receive, are the same which they have received ever since the Consignation of their Canon. p. 128.

SECT. IX.

That in our Saviours time these Books were true, and consequently were the Word of God p. 135.

SECT.

SECT. X.

That there is no reaſon to disbeleive the Scriptures. Objections briefly propoſed and anſwered: firſt generall Objections againſt the whole. p. 139.

SECT. XI.

Objections againſt particular parts briefly propoſed and anſwered. p. 149.

PART I.

Preface.

SECT. I.

ALthough I am not without apprehenſion, that the diſcourſe which I deſign may be prejudged unprofitable, as pretending to lay again that foundation which hath long ſince been layed in the minds of all that will be readers of it; yet when I conſider thoſe ſcandals, which the looſeneſſe of our times have offered even to the religious, and the bold and horrid pride and preſumption of Atheiſts and

Epicures, which by a prophane and confident asserting the uncertainty of all things (undervaluing the abilities of our Natures, to raise an opinion of their personal excellencies) have laboured to introduce into the world a general Atheism, or at least a doubtful Scepticisme in matters of Religion: And when we consider the nature of our minds, which are upon any ill suggestions apt still to receive some impression (those things being of like operation with Calumny, which if it be confidently and boldly charged, will be sure to leave some scar behind it) When we observe this use and inclination in our selves, which is in things where we have not a belief of what is spoken, or do not give perfect credit to an accusation, yet to admit to a suspition, that things may be as they are spoken; and although the strength of our contrary belief do keep us from a full assenting

ing to the thing in queſtion, yet if it happen, that the things concern our ſelves, and we have uſed to croſſe our opinions, or our belief in our way of practiſe, ſuch is the perverſeneſſe of our hearts, that in ſuch caſes they will make uſe of the belief of others (eſpecially if they have the reputation of known men) to oppoſe againſt their own belief, and interpoſe betwixt the laſhes of their conſciences and themſelves: I ſay the preſent condition of Religion, and the corrupted nature of our hearts being ſuch, I cannot think it uſeleſs, nay nor unneceſſary, to raiſe a diſcourſe of Religion, even from the common Elements and Fundamentals, and for a while, neglecting the more knowing party of men, to undertake, ſo far as the argument will bear, to follow the way of demonſtration, and lead on the weakeſt from ſuch things as they themſelves cannot deny, to the acknowledge-

ment of the mysteries of our faith, and to the practice of the laws and injunctions of our Religion.

SECT. II.

Of the design and definition of Religion, the prejudices, and pretences against the Christian, the sum of what is in controversie deduced to three Questions.

1. *Of the* { *Being and* / *Attributes* } *of God.*
2. *Of the Immortality of the souls of men.*
3. *Of the Authority of Scriptures.*

WE may begin with the consideration of the definition (and the design of our selves in the matter) of Religion; however the practise of the world may contradict it; I hope we may take this definition of Religion, as one that is agreeable

ble to the apprehenſion which all of us have of it. Religion is a reſignation of our ſelves to God, with an expectation of reward; The deſign indeed of Religion, however it ought to be meerly obedience to the pleaſure and the will of God, and the hight of it is barely terminated in his glory, (ſo that the higheſt act of it is Adoration) yet I ſay the deſign of mens Religion, is, that it may be well unto themſelves, and to bring them to an eſtate of happineſs. The very definition of Religion ſuppoſeth a Godhead, according to that of the Apoſtle *He that cometh to God muſt believe that God is.* The very deſign of it ſuppoſeth that both the party worſhiping is capable of rewards, and that God likewiſe doth not neglect his ſervice (in the following words of the Apoſtle) *that he is the rewarder of thoſe that diligently ſeek him.*

Again, the reſignation of our ſelves ſuppoſeth the reſignation of our ſu-

pream faculties, those are our understandings and our wils, *viz.* our wils to an obedience to his will, to a performance of his injunctions, to a submission to his providence, and a resignation likewise of our understandings to his truth. Now it is agreable to reason, as well as to the Apostle, that we cannot practise the will of God, unless we know it, and that we cannot know it, unless it be discovered to us. So then in our profession of Religion, there are these supposals. That there is a God, and That he is a rewarder of those that seek him (and that supposeth that they are capable of his way of rewarding,) That the diligence of our seeking must be exercised in a way conformable to his will; and That to his purpose we want not rules for this conformity. These are, I say, the general suppositions of every Religion under Heaven. You see that the being of Religion is in self-resignation

on, but the end of that resignation it is reward (still retaining in mind that caution, that mercenarily to labour for reward is not the supream exaltation of Religious acts, but that it is the ordinary degree of mens Religion, and an allowable and commendable step, and degree unto the other; it being the strong powerful motive to *Moses* to neglect the momentany pleasure of *Pharaohs* Court, because he had respect unto the recompense of reward:) I say it is the natural way of reason in every act to look at some or other end, and to undertake no labour without an eye upon reward. Now so it is that some men, who account themselves the wisest, observing as they think the design & issue of Religion, and comparing the labour and the wages, they with much wisdome, as they think, conclude, that all the matter of gain, which comes by Religion, is no way worth the pain and labour.

labour. They ſee that all things come alike to all, there is but one iſſue to the juſt, and to the unjuſt; nay, they think they ſee, that the ſucceſſe of things it is not equal to the religious and irreligious; but that beſides the pleaſure & enjoyments which religious men do fondly deny themſelves, beſides that melancholy life which they by their ſtrictneſs and preciſeneſs bring upon themſelves, they often anticipate & hinder the thriving ſucceſſe of their own deſigns by a dangerous and prejudicial ſcrupuloſity: whereas the other party, beſides the pleaſure of their lives in private, they carry matters of ſtate, and either by force or fraud they circumvent and overcome the narrow and feeble ſpirits of the others; and the ſucceſs of things they oft obſerve to be anſwerable to his Hypotheſis, ready they are to ſay with thoſe in *Mal.* 3. 14. *Surely it is vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it to keep his*

Or

Ordinances, to walk mournfully before the Lord of Hosts, whereas we see the proud happy, and they that work wickedness are set up, and they that tempt God are even delevered? Upon such observations upon the reward, they conclude clean contrary to the suppositions of Religion, God is no rewarder of those that seek him; such as deny themselves the most for him, they have no other reward but sadnesse of soul and debility of body, and exility of fortune: surely if he were a God, he would not thus desert his party, and give them over to the scorn and derision, and miseries of the world: surely therfore there is no God, or surely he sees it not, or tush God cares not for it, and so these mens Religion is vain: or else these men they have not hit upon the true way of worship, the rules they go by they are uncertain, that which they pretend to the word of God, it is not so, but some bundle of Impostures, devised

deviſed by ſome body, and put upon theſe ſimple people to delude them, they indeed flatter themſelves with expectations when they are dead, but thoſe are but vain, for who knows that the ſpirit of a man goes upward, and that the ſpirit of a beaſt goes downward? as a man dies, ſo dies a beaſt, wherefore let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die. Theſe are the ſubſtance of thoſe allegations, which by Atheiſts, Epicures, and Machiavelians are ſet in competition with Religion: theſe are thoſe Engines by which the devil hath prevailed to the ſeduction of many, and to the entertainment of a ſuſpicion by men, otherwiſe prudent and ſober-minded: the main foundations upon which we differ, are theſe,

1. The Being & providence of God.
2. The Immortality of the ſoul.
3. The Authority of the holy Scripture.

Before

Before we come therefore to the particular myſteries of faith, it is neceſſary that theſe be cleared, before we come to ſettle in particular differences of Religion, that we juſtifie our ſelves againſt the petulancies of thoſe men, that would laugh and ſcoff us out of all Religion; crying to every party (as they ſee the veriable chances of the world to give occaſion) where is now their God? Indeed if there were not a God to worſhip, or if God did not ſee, and regard, and reward our worſhip, or had we no rule to walk by, we ſhould have none encouragement to Religion: Nay, upon all that happens to men in this life, we cannot but allow, that, upon their ſuppoſition, they conculde not irrationally. Concur we muſt with our Apoſtle, that *if in this life only we had hope, we were of all men moſt miſerable*; But we know aſſuredly, that thou God ſeeſt, and that thou haſt given us thy holy Word

word to be a light to our feet and a lanthorn to our paths; and that though now we see but through a glass darkly, yet the time is coming when we shall see thee face to face. The state of the controversie then is this, which of the parties is in the wisest way; The Atheist think that the Religious is a fool; the Religious, that he is a fool that saith in his heart there is no God: The Atheist that the souls of men are mortal, as the souls of beasts; the Religious, that the Atheist is a beast to think so, *&c.* But such kinds of contests are vain, wherefore let's see where the truth lies.

SECT. III.

Of the being of God evicted by way of demonstration from the Creatures.

THe Question is, Whether or no there be a God?

And here first I must entreat that it may be remembred what that party is

is which defends the negative, and what is the design that we are upon, that so the following discourse be not thought useless or industriously set out of the ordinary road. Our enemies are Atheists: and that which is to be convinced is the Atheistical proneness of men; so that in the controverted questions it will not be a sufficient way of answering, to say that the Scriptures and the spirit of God make it evident that there is a God; and again, that the Scriptures are evinced to be the word of God by the spirit of God bearing witness with the heart of man. It is true, that the Scriptures clearly deliver that there is a God, as true it is, that God by his grace doth work the heart of man to a believing of the Scriptures: these things they are really true to those who already are believers, and each of them conduceth to a confirmation of the other: but to a man that doubts of the Godhead, and denies

nies the Scriptures; to use those arguments for satisfaction, were to minister a scandal to him, and by a circular way of reasoning and assuming *gratis* the matter of the question (for they do no otherwise who only say, we must believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, because God saies so, and God we must believe, because the Scriptures say so) to make them think we have no more to say but this it is so, because it is so: and so confirm them in their Atheism and irreligion. It was a certain observation of *Aristotle*, that πᾶσα μάθησις ἐκ προυπαρχούσης γίνεται γνώσεως in every acquisition of knowledg, the understanding doth proceed from premises which were known, to the inference of a new conclusion, which was before unknown: and so was that other Aphorism of his, that there is no disputation unlesse upon principles, which are confessed on both sides, & such only are the common principles of

of intellegence, and the plain discoveries of the senses there where the mysteries of faith are questioned; it will not be sufficient therefore in the present case, to alleadge that saying of the Apostle, *Rom.* 1. 20. *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:* but we must clear and demonstrate the truth of that allegation, by reasons taken from things visible: however, it may be lawful for us to make use of the direction of this place, as a canon for our enquiry, although not of the authority of it, as a sufficient argument to enforce a belief from the gainsayer. I say therefore, that an eternal power may be evenced from the creation of the world, and that the creation of the world may be demonstrated from the consideration of things visible, so that by reason as well

well as Faith(though not ſo readily) we may be brought to underſtand, that the world was made of things which diſappear. I ſay that the world was not eternal, but created, is demonſtrable from things that are viſible; Our argument ſhall be from generation: Whatſoever is begotten was begotten of ſome other, for nothing can poſſibly beget, or make it ſelf, otherwiſe it will follow, that the ſame thing is, and is not, both at one inſtant, ſeeing it is both the producer and the thing to be produced: it is to be produced, and ſo it is not yet, it is likewiſe a producer, and that ſuppoſeth that it is in being: It is therefore in being, and it is not in being, that's a manifeſt contradiction: Wherefore nothing can generate, or make, or produce it ſelf: Wherefore every thing that is begotten, is begotten of ſome other; and then the other which begat it, either was it ſelf in the ſame manner begotten,
or

or it was not, if it was not, we are already come to the firſt principal which was begotten, and ſo have diſcovered a Godhead. If it was begotten, either we muſt follow up the courſe of ſucceſſive generation to ſome firſt production from a cauſe eternal, or elſe we muſt neceſſarily ſay, that the courſe of generations had no beginning, and conſequently that infinite ſucceſſions are already paſt, which is as much as to acknowledge, that an infinite number of ſucceſſions are paſt, and if paſt, then they are at an end; ſo we have found an infinite number, which hath had an end, that is another contradiction: Again, if any ſhall affirm, that the courſe of generation had no begining, but that the number of them hath been infinite, let us put a caſe and reaſon with him: we will imagine the generations of *Abraham* for example, and of *Joſeph*, the ſon of *Jacob*, the ſon of *Iſaac*, the ſon of

Abraham. I demand therefore whether before the birth of *Abraham*, there had paſt an infinite ſeries of generations, or not? If the ſeries was finite, the work of generation had begining, which is the concluſion I contend for, if the ſeries paſt was infinte, then at the birth of *Joſeph* 'tis evident that more generations were paſt, ſo we have found a number greater than that which was ſuppoſed to be infinite, and conſequently that was not infinite, ſo it was both infinite and not infinite, a manifeſt contradiction: but if we ſay, that *Abraham*'s ſeries was infinite, and that ſo was *Joſeph*'s alſo, then it will follow that the number of *Abraham's* was equal with the number of *Joſeph*'s, but *Abraham*'s was but a part of *Joſeph's*, wherefore the part is equal to the whole. Elſe admit that *Abraham*'s was finite, but when it came to *Joſeph*, that then the number was infinite; it follows then, that a finite

finite number, added to a finite, ſhall make an infinite, which likewiſe is againſt the common light of reaſon. We ſee therefore that ſuppoſing the eternity of the world, or the infinity of generations, doth force the mind to contradictions, and conſequently the fiction is vain, and utterly impoſſible. And as we have argued in the way of generation, ſo we may likewiſe in every thing, where there is motion or mutation, that is in all the parts of the viſible world. The creation therefore of the world from the viſible things thereof is manifeſt, which was to be demonſtrated. And from the creation of the world we may infer thoſe inviſible Attributes of the Eternity, and Power, and Wiſdom, and Providence of God, that which reſts yet to be demonſtrated.

SECT. IV.

Of the Attributes of God, thoſe likewiſe evicted from the Creatures,

THat which we are yet upon, it is a general introduction to Religion, and a demonſtration of the Neceſſity of it againſt Atheiſts and Epicures, and ſuch as are the deſpiſers of it: that which we pretend is, that their rejection of Religion cannot proceed from any conſiderate, ſolid reaſoning of their underſtanding, but from an evil diſpoſition of their affections, which makes them, we believe, rather wiſh, and ſo give out, that their aſſertions are true, then that themſelves believe them to be ſo; particularly, in that grand principle and fundamental of a God, and of a providence, from whence the reſt will freely and naturally follow. We have by plain and eaſie demonſtration evinced, that from the

the visible things of this world, the creation of it may be evicted: and that the Apostle, although to such as were initiated in Christianity, he did propose it upon the well attested authority of the spirit of God, by many mighty signes and wonders declared to be with him: although to them he thought it needless any more then to refer them to the natural principles of their understandings: yet that he was not wanting to the infidels, but by designing to them so ready a topick or medium; from whence to begin their argument, hath not deserved of the unbelieving that slender estimation which they have been pleased to afford him: there is no action or mutation in any thing visible whatsoever, but it is performed by motion, nor any motion followed home successively through it's causes but will force the mind of man to a first mover; and though for some reasons I did propose the argument

in

in the name of generation, yet if in the place of it you ſhould have been pleaſed to ſubſtitute motion in general, or bodily action (for either they are formally the ſame, or conſequent at leaſt to one another) the variation of the terms of the argument would no way have changed the ſubſtance of the concluſion: which I intimate to give notice of the ſufficiency of that argument, which in it ſelf comprizes a multitude of others more particular, leſt any advantage might poſſibly be made againſt the want of number in my argument. Well, having concluded the creation, and begining of the world, we ſee it follows, that thence we conclude the eternal power and Godhead. that is, the eternity and power of the Godhead: to which that we may fully convince our Atheiſt, we will likewiſe adde the wiſdom, and providence, and the immenſity, and other attributes of God

And

And first for Eternity; we have by undeniable consequence resolved all motions in the world into the bosom of a first mover, and if we suppose him a first mover, this supposition will evidently conclude, that he is eternal, that is, that he is without begining of essence, or without any term or limit of duration; for if it had any begining of essence or duration, that begining of being presupposeth a priority of not being (that is, that actual being is not of the essence of it) and so, that we may without any contradiction suppose it not to be yet in being, that is, we may bring our understanding without error to the apprehensions of it as being yet in the state of power only, or potential being, so as things are in their causes. So then let us conceit it in this state, and compare this state with the other, when it hath a being, and it is vident, that this passage or transition from want of being to a being cannot

be

be without a motion, nor motion without an actual mover: but that which moves a thing from not being to a ſtate of being, is neceſſarily a precedent mover, to that wch from it receives its being: ſo then that which we ſuppoſed to be the firſt original mover, it will have a mover which ſhall of neceſſity have gon before it, and conſequently it will be both a firſt and not a firſt mover, which is a plain and evident contradiction. Inſtead of multiplying Arguments without neceſſity, we will only return by the footſteps of our analyſis, and ſo from the being of a firſt mover conclude the Eternity: If it be a firſt mover, then it had no former mover, and if ſo, then it never was produed from not being, unto being; and if ſo, then it never had any beginning of its being, then it is Eternal: therefore whatſoever is the firſt mover it muſt of neceſſity likewiſe be Eternal. But from the common affections of things

things visible, we did before demonstrate an original and first mover, wherefore the visible things of this world, they likewise do evict the Eternity of the Godhead.

Having demonstrated the Eternity of God: the rest of his Attributes, such as we are able to comprehend in this life, they all of them will follow, his Necessity, Independency, Infinity, Unity, Omnipotency, Omniscience.

And first for his Necessity: whereby I meam his Necessity of being, not his Necessity of operation, so as it is opposed to freedom of will and power to act, or to forbear. I say then, that the Godhead is a necessary being, that is, that it is impossible it should fail, and implies a contradiction, that it should not be: that is it which Divines mean, when they say 'tis eternal *a parte post*, as well as *a parte ante*: for if it be not a necessary being, that is, if necessity of being be not included Necessity.

included in the essence of the Godhead, then it is not impossible that it should loose his being, that is, it is possible that it should loose his being, that is, it is in the power of something to cause it to loose his being: but nothing can pass from being to not being without change or motion, so then the motion of it is in the power of some other, & consequently this is not the original of motion, but that other; but we supposed this to be the original of motion, and consequently, it is not possible it should be deprived of its being, that is, it is a Necessary being in respect of others, and as impossible it is that it should loose its being of it self. Indeed it is a manifest contradiction, that any thing should have a power over its own essence, and needs no further conviction or opposition, seeing the active power of any thing is founded in the essence of it, & consequently cannot exceed the essence, or bring

it

it not to be: However the neceſſity of the exiſtence of God will be evinced from the Simplicity and uncompounded property of his nature, and that from his Eternity; for imagine him to be compounded, then it muſt be of ſome principles of compoſition and if ſo, then thoſe principles muſt be preſuppoſed to his being, & precede him in a priority of nature: ſo then there will be ſomewhat in nature before that which was before evinced, and now ſuppoſed to be eternal: and if he be a ſimple eſſence and eternal, he muſt be purely actual and nothing potential, for if in his eſſence be any thing potential, that is, if it be in any poſſibility, that poſſibility relates to ſome ſuperiour and former cauſe: Whereas we have all this while been reaſoning about the firſt cauſe and ſupreme: Simple he is therefore and pure, and a ſimple act out of the bounds of poſſibility & of ſuffering, and ſo again we have Simplicity.

con-

concluded his neceſſity of being.

Indepen-dency. Now as we have demonſtrated his Neceſſity, ſo likewiſe we may thence collect his independency. We are indeed in a great deal of blindneſſe in the contemplation of the Godhead, and muſt humbly crave leave of God to be admitted to enquire and ſpeak after the manner of men: God doth not exact that we ſhould exceed the meaſure of our underſtandings in our contemplation of him, or that we ſhould deliver him as he is in himſelf, or otherwiſe then he is pleaſed to reveal himſelf to our weak and feeble nnderſtandings, & ſo we hope his Majeſty will not be offended at us, if after the manner of men we labour to deduce one attribute out of another; if withall we take this caution, that upon our dependency of inference, and the precedency and following in our diſcourſe, we do not conclude that ſucceſſion or dependency of attributes

in

in God, and imagine that to be in the Object, which is only in the Organ, I could not but take this advantage for this caution now, that from his Eternity, Simplicity, and Neceſſity, I am concluding his Independency; this, to our underſtanding and diſcourſe, may well enough (as concerning us) depend upon thoſe other, that is, the ſuppoſition of thoſe will force the mind to an acknowledgement of this, but to imagine that order to be in God, were to imagine a contradiction, by putting a dependency upon the attribute of Independency: If he be a ſimple act, and pure, it is impoſſible he ſhould at all depend upon another for his being: for ſuppoſe his being to depend upon another, then that other muſt neceſſarily be preſuppoſed, and be the cauſe likewiſe of his being; for if it depend upon another for his being, his being cannot be without that other, and ſo it is preſuppoſed, therefore

fore it is before this in order, and as in order ſo in cauſality, for we ſpeak of a real & eſſential dependency, not of a Logical or notional; wherefore this other, and not the Godhead will be a cauſe and a former cauſe: and conſequently the Godhead, unleſs it be independent, will neither be the firſt cauſe, nor eternal; contrary to that which was before demonſtrated.

Incorporeality. Again the Simplicity and the Impaſſibility of God will neceſſarily evict him to be incorporeal, ſeeing that every body is compounded and paſſible, nay we may go ſo far as to ſay, that corporeity is paſſibility, for corporeity is quantity, and in the laſt abſtracted notion conſiſts in three dimenſions, but quantity is nothing elſe but diviſibility, that is an aptitude to ſuffer diviſion, that is paſſibility; whatſoever therefore is impaſſible, that likewiſe is incorporeal, which was to be demonſtrated.

Immenſity. And if it be incorporeal, then likewiſe

wise it is unbounded and unlimited by place, for whether place be taken for the surface of some ambient body, or for a space, the very essence of a place consists in relation to a body enclosed; but that which is no body cannot admit of an enclosure, therefore that which is incorporeal, is free from the limits and terms of place, so then it is evident, that the first cause is free from the limits and restraints of place, before we proved that it was free from any limits of duration, but in the freedom from time and place consists the notion of immensity, and so the immensity of God is now demonstrated, (or, which is all one, his Infinity.)

Unity.

But if the God head be infinite, then likewise it is but one, and so we may demonstrate the Unity of the essence of the God-head. Now that there cannot be two infinite essences we will demonstrate, But first, for the help of our imagination, and to render

render that ſerviceable to our underſtandings, we will imagine two bodies infinite; Then thus, either the one of thoſe bodies, is in all the ſpace wherein the other body is, or it is not, if they be both together in the ſelf ſame ſpace, then that which is the longitude of the one, is the longitude of the other, and their latitude is the ſame, & ſo likewiſe their profundity the ſame, I ſay, not only equal: for as from filling equality of ſpaces we muſt infer equality of dimenſions, ſo from identity of ſpace we muſt conclude them to have the ſame dimenſions; but the laſt and moſt abſtracted notion of a body is Mathematically reſolved into thoſe dimenſions, wherefore thoſe which fill the ſelf ſame ſpace, are the ſelf ſame body, and ſo two bodies, they will be but one body, which is a manifeſt contradiction: but if we ſhall ſay, that where one of theſe infinite bodies is, the other is not, then there

there will be ſome ſpace where one of theſe bodies is excluded, and conſequently it will be limited and finite which yet we ſuppoſed to be infinite; ſo then, it will be infinite and not infinite, which is a manifeſt contradiction: We have demonſtrated therefore that there cannot be two infinite bodies, the truth is, we ought to demonſtrate that there cannot be two infinite eſſences, but the notion of being and eſſence is ſo abſtracted and high, that, it would ſtrain our underſtanding to keep it ſo long intent upon its abſtracted object, as were required to go through a demonſtration where infinite ſimple being ſhould be the ſubject, & unity the affection to be demonſtrated, but if we ſhall proceed but to other degrees, as for example, of power, or wiſdom, or the like, the demonſtration will run as clear to the mind, as in the caſe of bodies it did to the fancy: for either thoſe infinite powers

are the ſame, or not the ſame; if they be the ſame, then it is but one power which was vainly imagined to be two: but if the powers be not the ſame, then one power is where the other power is not (not meaning *in ubi* of place, but of caſe) and conſequently a caſe where one of the powers is limited, which yet it is ſuppoſed to be infinite, there can be therefore but one infinite power, nor any more than one infinite eſſence, and ſo we have demonſtrated the Unity of the God-head.

It remains that we demonſtrate the Omnipotence of God, and his Omniſcience: and firſt for his Omnipotence, That God was a God of power, it was demonſtrated then, when we found him to be the firſt cauſe, and original mover, and the creator of the world. Now power is nothing elſe but a fountain or ſpring of Cauſality: Cauſality alwaies exerts it ſelf by

by motion: the Original therefore of all motion is the original of all power; the Original of all power is Omnipotent, wherefore it is demonstrated that God is Omnipotent.

The same argument will prove him likewise to be Omniscient, For all knowledg is an exertion of power, and consists in a conjunction of the operations of the object and the mind, and the nature of it is no way intelligible otherwise then by this exertion: this exertion is motion, and so the original of motion is the orginal of knowledg; and God being Omnipotent, he is also Omniscient, and so we have evicted his Omniscience: that is an infinite knowledg, which includes in it the knowledg of all particulars, for if particular in the world were excluded, it were not infinite, but limited; so then the thoughts of the heart are open to the view of his omniscience: And thus according to that Canon of direction,

rection, which we took from the Apoſtle we have proceeded, and that ſtrictly and warily, according to the laws of demonſtration, and from the viſible things of this world, enforcing our ſelves firſt to an acknowledgment of the creation of the world; we have thence, taking in only the common principles, and common notions (κοιναὶ ἐννοίαι) of intelligence, proceeded higher, to a demonſtration of the eternal power and God-head: that is, of thoſe Attributes of the God-head, which by the irreligious and Atheiſts, have been pretended not to be; and actually manifeſted, that the inviſible things of God may be diſcovered by thoſe things which do appear.

PART.

PART II.

SECT. I.

A Proposal of the Argument for the Immortality of the soul, and a manifestation of the major proposition, that incorporeal substances are immortal.

THe second thing which we pretended to demonstrate as a general ground-work whereon to build a necessity of Religion in the general, it is the Immortality of the souls of men; for *if in this life only we have hope*, then in the judgment of the Apostle, *we are of all men most miserable.* Now the truth is, that we have no absolute necessity of much endeavour to clear the Immortality of the soul, after so clear and demonstrative a discovery of

of the eſſence and the attributes of the God head, ſeeing that a bare reflexion either upon the general way of reaſoning, whereby we come to thoſe concluſions, or upon thoſe ſimple objects of the mind, which were the ſubjects of every particular enquiry, muſt neceſſarily prompt us with undeniable arguments of the ſpiritual and incorporeal nature of our mind, from whence will neceſſarily follow the natural incorruptibility of it, that which is all that we pretend to, when we ſay, that it is immortal: (for it is not our meaning, that in the notion of Immortality is included a neceſſity of being, ſuch as relating to the power of God ſhould put it out of a capacity of Annihilation)

Yet conſidering the darkneſſe of our minds, and that inability towards a ſtrict and vigorous reflection which even in thoſe who are moſt practiſed in the contemplation of them-

themselves, and in the scrutiny of the waies of their own internal operations, is over frequent: and considering how little reason there is to expect it of those, who by their way of living are more deeply engaged among things, no way exceeding the affections & circumstances of bodies, and bodily motions, and perhaps may think themselves unconcerned to be busie in the knowledge of themselves: It will be requisite that we insist more particularly upon it; that so the matter may be cleared even to the most vulgar apprehensions, supposing only that they can but obtain so much of themselves, as warily to attend to that which is to be delivered.

Now the substance of all that I shall speak towards the demonstration of the souls Immortality, shall be summarily comprized in this one Syllogism.

Whatsoever substance is incorpo-

real it is immortal. But the ſouls of men are incorporeal ſubſtances. *Ergo*

The former of theſe Propoſitions is indeed in it ſelf undemonſtrable, as being a principle evident to a conſidering mind, and ſo not reſolvible into any former principles, ſo that all that can be done to a further clearing of it, wil only be to examine and follow home the terms, to their firſt original notions, which they are aſſigned to repreſent. Indeed, the word mortality, as it is uſually apprehended, hath alwaies reference to a compounded ſubſtance, or to a body, which hath in it ſelf ſome principle and cauſe of motion, and ſignifies no more but a capacity of the material and paſſive part, to be deprived of that inward active principle of its motions, as is evident by thoſe things, which we uſe to ſay may die, or are dead; as men, and beaſts, and plants: but when the queſtion is

is only of that active principle, it cannot so justly be put in the terms of mortality, as of corruptibility, or natural tendency to a corruption.

So then, that which we are to strive for is the true and accurate notion of corruption, and when we have driven it to the highest we shall find, that *corruption* is nothing else but a *dissolution* of things joyned together, and that this *dissolution* is nothing but a *separation*, and that *separation* is nothing but *division*, and that division is an immediate, and a formal act of *quantity*, and *quantity* is nothing else but a mode of *corporeity*; so as you see that corruptibility doth even in the notion of it include corporeity: whatsoever therefore is incorporeal, it is incorruptible, which was to be demonstated.

SECT.

SECT. II.

A proof of this propoſition, that the ſouls of men are incorporeal ſubſtances, by comparing the affections of bodies with thoſe of ſouls.

BUt the ſouls of men are incorporeal ſubſtances.

That they are ſubſtances is evident, ſeeing that they are ſubjects of certain properties and affections and a conſtant internal principle of motion, which is the very formal notion of a ſubſtance. It remaines only therefore, that we demonſtrate them to be incorporeal.

Now for the clearing of this, it is requiſite that we conſider wherein conſiſts the being of a body, and wherein conſiſts the being of an humane ſoul: nor can we uſe any poſſible means to come to an apprehenſion of their being, other than by conſidering thoſe primary paſſions and

and properties whereby they make discovery of themselves.

The first and primary affection of a body is that extension of parts, whereof it is compounded, and a capacity of division, upon which, as upon the fundamental mode, the particular dimensions (that is, the figures) and the local motions do depend: the *figure* being nothing but a particular & determined extension of the matter, towards such & such parts; and *local motion* being nothing but division, so that whatsoever may possibly be performed by any body, it must have its original ground work in divisibility, and its actual being in devision, towards which the situation, and figure, and determined quantity of parts must make the disposition.

Again for the being of our souls, if we reflect upon our selves we shall find, that all our knowledg of them resolves into this, that we are beings conscious

conſcious to our ſelves of ſeveral kinds of cogitations, that by our outward ſenſes we apprehend bodily things preſent, that by our Imagination we apprehend things abſent, that we oft recover into our apprehenſions things paſt and gone, that upon our perception of things we find our ſelves variouſly affected, ſometimes with pleaſure or pain for things preſent, ſometimes with hope or deſpair of things abſent, and the like: Nay, we are conſcious to our ſelves of objects, which could not by any bodily impreſſions be wrought in our fancies or our brain; and of ſuperiour paſſions anſwerable to thoſe objects. In one word, we find that our ſouls are a kind of eſſences which are conſcious (or having a ſenſe) of things.

Now then we are to compare together theſe two properties of a body and a ſoul, and ſo conclude either an agreement or a diſagreement in the

the natures of those subjects.

And here upon the very first view of a considering mind it will appear, that divisibility is not apprehension, or judgment, or desire, or discourse; that to cut a body into several parts, or put it into several shapes, or bring it to several motions, or mixe it after several waies, will not serve to bring it to apprehend or desire; it is not the hammering and filing, and fitting of the wheels of a watch, which can make it apprehend the end for which it serves, or comprehend the motion of the sun which it is made to measure; nor is it material whether we take an example in things natural or artificial, or upon what principles of mixture we proceed, the conclusion will be still the same; for sense, and perception, and apprehension, and desire, &c. they are as great strangers to the obscure notions of heat and cold, and moisture, and drought,

and

and of those elements to which they are assigned, to fire, and air, and earth, and water, as they are to quantity, and situation, and figure, and motion, and the like, there is no man certainly that can clearly apprehend, that combining any proporton of fire, and air, & water, and earth, should make the lump of it to know or comprehend what is done to it, or by it : we see not then any the least inducement in our notion of bodies simple or mixed, or howsoever varied, to bring us to an apprehension of cogitation.

Nor yet will our reflection upon our cogitation bring us to any apprehension of corporeity or divisibility : the truth is, our sense and apprehension of bodies cannot infallibly assure us, that there are any bodies in the world, but we must be forced to an higher principle, whereon to ground that assurance, so far is cogitation & apprehension, and the like, from

from involving in its being any corporeity; nay we see manifestly, that upon the division of the body, the soul remaines entire, and undivided: it is not the loss of an hand, or foot, or eye, that can maim the understanding, or the will, or cut off the affections: so that we have not any the least inducement under the notion of cogation to involve division, or under the subject of cogitation to include the subject of division or divisibility.

To come then to a conclusion: it doth evidently appear, that corporeity consists in divisibility, and that the essence of the soul consists in being a conscious essence, or a cogitative being, to be a cogitative is far different from being divisible or extended: Wherefore the essence of the soul is far different from the essence of a body: Wherefore the souls of men they are incorporeal essences, ἀσώματοι οὐσίαι.

SECT.

SECT. III.

A further Proof of it by the general way of apprehenſion.

Now although the truth and certainty of propoſitions depends not upon the multitude of arguments whereby they are concluded, and ſo we have already ſufficiently diſcharged our undertaking; yet ſomthing ſhall be further added towards the diſcovery of the ſpirituality of the ſoul, to ſhew that it doth far exceed the ſphere of corporeity, and is not confined by the ſtreightning boundary of ſenſe: To this concluſion a preparation will be made from the General way of our apprehending, and it will be perfectly inferred from our { Simple Apprehenſion. / Judgment. / Diſcourſe. }

And firſt of all let us conſider our way of apprehenſions in the general, our apprehenſions even of ſenſible objects

objects, for however we are apt to imagine, that those may be performed by bodies, upon an exact scrutiny we shall find it otherwise. That this may appear, we shall do well to observe and take off an errour, which even from our childhood we have taken in: it is a common belief of ours, that sense is performed in the outward organs; touching, for example, in the hand, seeing in the eye, and so of the rest: (In them, I say, and not only by them) and then we put our selves to no further trouble, for to know how sense is made, then only to think that something hot toucheth the hand, and so the hand feels heat, that the image of some body appears in the eye, and so the eye sees the body; briefly, that sense is performed either by an immediate contact, as in touching and tasting; or by a resemblance, which by the object is wrought in the organ, and that in the matter of sensible perception

there is no exceeding the power of these two bodies, the object, and the organ; nor any superiour operation to that which may be performed by the application of several bodies: but to take off this imposture of the senses, I shall need to do no more, but to demonstrate that all our sense is immediatly performed in the brain, and not in the limbs, or organs: We will instance only in the senses of feeling and sight.

And first, that our feeling is performed in the brain by the mediation of the nerves, it is made manifest by our observation of such diseases as take away the sense of feeling, how that the seat of those diseases it is not in the limbs, but in the head, Palseys, Epilepsies, Apoplexes, and the rest: the seat of them is in those parts of the brain from whence do spring those nerves by which our operations are performed, and the way or remedy for restitution of our feeling

feeling, it is to take away those obstructions from the brain, whereupon the effect doth follow; now all this were needlesse, if sense were performed immediatly in the limbs themselves: Indeed it may possibly be imagined, that in those cases we are therefore deprived of sense, because our motion is intercepted; that there is some activity towards sense depending upon the motion of the limbs: although there be no visible strength in this objection, yet there are sufficient instances to take it off, seeing there either are, or lately were examples living of such as had no sense at all of feeling, and yet performed their local motions perfectly. Moreover many unquestionable experiments have bin made of such as have affirmed, that they have felt in such a finger, and such a toe, and that after their hands or their legs have been cut off. Many other instances and arguments may be

brought to prove, that the ſenſe of feeling is not performed in the outward limbs.

And ſecondly, for the ſenſe of ſeeing, that that likewiſe is not performed in the eye, it is evident; the cauſe why it would ſeem to be ſo, is becauſe it is very evident, that the images of things do indeed paſs thither, and are conveyed after diverſe refractions and reflections through the coats and humors of the eye, to the bottom or that tunicle, which is called *retiformis*. Hence it is obvious to conclude, that viſion is therefore performed without the eye. But if this were ſo, beſide that no reaſon could be given why with both our eys, and two images of it, we ſee but one thing: it would neceſſarily follow that we could not ſee any quantity bigger than our eye in its natural ſituation: for if images were ſeen in the eye, they would be ſeen as they are in the eye; but in the bottom of

the eye the images of things are inverted, and consequently the things themselves would seem to be inverted, men would seem to us with their heads below, and their feet above, that which is on the right hand would seem to be on the left.

Now to prove that the Images are there inverted, besides the demonstrative reasons that so it must be, we may at any time make experiments to attest to those demonstrations. It is impossible but that the visual beams of larger objects must interfect each other in the eye, and by that cutting one the other, the situation of the parts must be inverted; and thus much hath ever been apprehended, and confest by all those that have understood the laws of radiation; but some conceiving that by an inverted species an object could not be seen upright, have with mighty industry devised most ingenious errours concerning waies of refraction

refraction, whereby the coats and humours of the eye ſhould come to reerect the image before it come to the nerve, whereby viſion is performed: but time and experience have evicted all thoſe witty ſpeculations to have been nothing but ſubtile and fine impoſtures of the fancies of their authors, aery reaſons of a vain and ungrounded ſuppoſition: for it is evident to him that will take the pains to take of all the muſcles and tunicles, which ſerve for the feeding and motion of the eye, and clear that part only, where the viſual nerve is faſtened, then darkening a room, and only leaving an hole ſufficient to receive this eye, will ſtand behind it and look through it; to ſuch an one it will be evident, that the images of things without are inverted in the bottom of the eye, at the place where is the paſſage of the viſual nerve: and conſequently, as feeling was not performed in the hand, ſo neither

neither is seeing in the eye, but both of them in the brain.

But before things are conveyed to the brain, all the corporal similitude will quite be married; the form of a man cannot be carried through the optick nerve into the hollow of the brain, nor the quality of that we touch be carried quite along the nerves, from the fingers ends unto the head, and original of the nerves: but all that can be imagined to be done in the brain, it is in some motion and alteration made either of a vellication of the nerves, or by a vaporous and spiritous substances, passing through them, which retains, no signature of real similitude to the apprehensions, which upon such occasions or excitations men have of things: All that is done by the bodies, the object and the subject it is utterly different from the apprehension, which in man is begotten by them: there is no natural similitude betwixt

twixt a motion in the forepart of the head, and betwixt an object which we apprehend by it; our apprehensions of things they far exceed those bodily meanes, by which they are occationed, and consequently the subjects of these apprehensions do far exceed the subjects of those poor and gross productions; that is, the nature of our soules is far other and better than that of bodies, which was to be domonstrated.

SECT. IV.

The same further demonstrated from the several acts of the Soul, from simple Apprehensions.

HAving demonstrated the souls of men to be incoporeal substances, from the comparison of their properties with the affections of bodies, and therein finding no agreement or correspondency; and moreover from the general way of our operations, which could not possibly proceed from any, most subtil variety,

ty, or applications of dodily substances. It remains, that at this time we consider the several kinds of the cogitations of men, and

from the objects of { Simple apprehension, Judgment, Discourse,

conclude the immortality thereof.

First of all from simple apprehension, which is the first operation of the understanding of man, both in nature and times; and is the taking in of simple objects into the mind, and so furnishing it with materials for judgment and discourse: we shall find then the soules incorporeity if we shal but reflect upon such simple Ideas in it self, which represent things in themselves incorporeal; for a corporeal thing can neither be the Idea of an incorporeal being, neither can an incorporeal, immaterial, be subjected in a material or corporeal: we found before, that the application of bodies could not produce that sense

ſenſe which we have of bodies, much leſs then can that produce in us Ideas incorporeal, yet ſuch, and very many ſuch we find to be within our ſouls.

We find in our ſelves Ideas of ſpiritual ſubſtances, as of God and Angels, and of their ſimple and incorporeal properties and attributes, it is but returning back, an recalling into our remembrances thoſe demonſtrations of the ſeveral Attributes of the God-head, to which we did ariſe, even from the viſible things of this world, and they will ſatisfie us in this particular: our endeavour there was to demonſtrate the truth of them in themſelves, here to conſider the way and manner of their objective exiſtence in our apprehenſions, and the truth of demonſtration which ſatisfies the ſouls of men, it is that clear agreement betwixt the underſtanding and the object, that is, that things be in the underſtanding as they are in themſelves. We then

then demonſtrated God to be an immaterial ſubſtance, wherefore we gained an apprehenſion of a ſubſtance immaterial and incorporeal, and of immaterial properties; and conſequently the notions of the God-head an his attributes, were in our undeſtandings incorporeally, and ſo they are incorporeal.

It cannot here be denied, but that in our ordinary and tranſient thoughts and diſcourſes, we are very apt together with ſpiritual beings to draw into our fancies the images of things corporeal, for example, when we ſpeak of God we are very apt to have in our fancies the viſible heaven, and a repreſentation of ſome thing ſitting or acting in them: when we think or ſpeak of Angels we are apt to call to our remembrances the ſhapes of beautiful, winged, aery bodies, and ſo when we meditate upon Eternity, we are apt to reflect upon the image of time, of the revolution

volution of the Sun and Stars, which are the usuall measures of it, at leastwise of a successive duration of things, and there are diverse of us which terminate our thoughts in these images, and never obtain a flight beyond them, nor ever come to observe in our souls the difference betwixt imagination and intellectual apprehension : But yet notwithstanding when we have patience to stay upon the consideration of these objects, and warily attend to that inward light which we bear about us, we presently reject these images from the essence of God, and Angels, and Eternity, and by discourse we strip off these material and grosse representations,. and find, that the causes why upon such occasions as these they come into our minds, is, for that we commonly hear of them together, and because of those symbolical expressions of these beings which have delivered to us the know ledge

ledg of them. Almighty God calls himself the antient of daies, and it is not our custom to imagine any thing but cloathed with circumstances in some place; and the place that is usually mentioned with God, it is the heavens, and those heavens, which are the objects of our senses and imagination, are the place of the Sun, and Moon, and Stars; and so we are apt to form to our selves an image of God, or at least through incogitancy to let slip into our thoughts a fancy of some reverend image, siting above the Firmament.

Thus likewise the descriptions of the Angels, they are usually made to us in Scriptures by such representations: we see nothing fairer then our own kind, and so we conceive of them in the fairest shapes we can imagine, (and contrariwise of the devils in the most ugly) assigning to them wings, because under such forms the notion of them is veiled to us.

And

And yet at the same time we know, and can perhaps demonstrate evidently, that if God were a body, he could not be a God; that is, that the properties of a bodily substance can no way agree with that notion of the Godhead, which is immovably fastened in the very essence of our souls.

We know habitually that the nature and essence of the Angels that stood, it is the same with those that fell away; however we have fair and pleasant imaginations usually when we speak of those of light; and ugly, & foul when we think of those that are in chains of utter darkness: however the name of *Michael* and his Arch-Angels recal into our minds the images of the fairest of the children of men; and that of *Beelzebub* the Image of a Dragon.

So likewise the common measure of the duration of things, wherewith we usually converse, they are hours and

and daies, and months, and years, and these are made by the revolution of the Sun, and of the Stars, and those are attended with several positions of them in respect of themselves and us, with light and darkness, cold and heat, Winter and Summer, and those other vicissitudes: and speaking of Eternity we presently think of a long continuance, and so call into our imagination a long continued series of these revolutions, & vicissitudes; whereas yet we know, that where there is a vicissitude, there is a priority, and where there is a priority, there must be a begining, and where there was a begining, that was not eternal: 'tis plain, that if in eternity there were such parts as daies and years, there must be as many milions of years as minutes, and so that a minute were equal really to a thousand years, and so it follows clearly that Eternity even in our notion is an infinite and undivided unsucceſſive

ſucceſſive duration.

Theſe examples are ſufficient to ſhew the difference betwixt the intellectual apprehenſion of things, & the imagination which accompanies our ſuperficial thoughts, (our ſlight and curſory taking them to our minds) and to illuſtrate that, however in our fancies we may have corporeal repreſentations attending upon theſe ſpiritual beings, yet the Idea's whereby the underſtanding apprehends thoſe ſimple eſſences, are incorporeal, and conſequently the underſtanding part of man is incorporeal.

SECT. V.

From Judgment and Diſcourſe.

AND now whatſoever of perfection may be evinced to be in the ſouls of men from the ſimple apprehenſions of ſingle objects, may much more ſtrongly be concluded from thoſe

those more perfect operations, exercised in comparing several things together, and working out the truths, striking forth the light from those collisions. A judgment takes in two several simple terms, and upon them passeth the sentence of their agreement or disagreement.

A discourse takes into consideration two of the judgments already past, and decided by the soul, and from those two draws forth a third, and so brings into act those truths which folded in their causes lie in the secret places of the soul concealed from it self.

Now as the souls of men are conscious to themselves of certain essences within themselves, which neither in their being, nor in their oparation upon the soul are any way mixed with ought that is corporeal; and so from thence the incorporeity of the soul was immediatly concluded, so here in these second and

third operations of the soul, we have this further advantage, that however the simple objects which are the terms in the matters of judgment may be bodies, yet the acts of judging, and discerning, & reasoning, they are no bodily acts, nor come within the compass of bodily motions to be performed; and that even in those things which are most obvious to the outward senses or the inward, the understanding part is yet carried away far beyond the bounds and territories of the senses, and raises it self into the contemplation of causes of the things it either sees or hears, or otherwise perceives, and frames to it self consequences and corrolaries, such as are not sensible, but are only discoverable by a diviner light. By this diviner faculty it is that seizing upon any thing whatsoever, fixing it self steddily upon the contemplation of it, it passeth from the most contemptible of creatures, up to the incom-

incomprehenſible creator, it climbs up by degrees, and paſſeth through the continued chain of cauſes till it comes to that link which is faſtened to the chair of God; it reſts not in things below, but ſoars up ſteddily to immenſity and eternity. It is by this faculty, that upon ſight of the cauſes of things, it doth foreſee the effects and conſequences: and ſeeing the effects, it makes to it ſelf a concluſion of what muſt be the cauſes, and by frequent exerciſe in theſe contemplations attains to a kind of maſtery over the works of nature, and produceth things ſtrange and wonderfull in operation, it applies the active powers unto the paſſive (as the Schoolmen ſpeak) and ſo imitates God and nature in great and mervellous concluſions.

He obſerves the properties of a deſpicable ſtone, and is carried ſo far in the contemplation of the conſequences of thoſe properties

that he dares adventure himself upon the huge unruly ocean, under the conduct and direction of it, and he finds experience to answer to his contemplation, he gets the mastery of that unruly boisterous element: he rides securely upon the back of the dark waters: he makes a needle touched with a stone to supply the place of the stars of heaven: when the eyes of heaven are obscur'd from him amidst the dark waters & thick clouds of the sky; he examins all the chambers of the Sun, and imitates him in compassing the world, he goes out toward the East, & returns again, from the West; returns, and that loaden with the treasures of the world, with the blessings which *Moses* did assign to *Joseph*, Deut. 33. 13. *the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep, that toucheth beneath, the precious fruits brought forth by the Sun, and the precious things put forth by the Moon, the chief things of the antient mountains*

mountaines, and the precious things of the lasting hills, the precious things of the earth &c. he settles a correspondency betwixt the utmost distants of the world, and opens a traffick betwixt nations opposite in place, in manners and affections, such as had lyen concealed from the knowledg of one another, even almost from the time of the Ark that floated upon the waters: But what do I speak of these things? he displays the banner of Christ in the regions of death & hel; he sheds forth the glorious light of the Gospel to the people that sat in darkness, & in the shadow of death: What sensible Analogy or correspondency is there betwixt the situation or motion of a stone, and the salvation of mankind? and yet by various consequences he discovers how by the meanes of that, this likewise may be effected; he discovers it, and puts it in a successful and happy execution.

What is there more contemtible

then

then a ſtone? hardly any thing that is a ſubſtance, and yet it is much leſſe contemptible then a ſhadow, he obſerves a ſhadow, and that carries him aloft to a contemplation, and a diſcovery of that moſt glorious creature which comes forth as a bridegroom out of his Chamber, and rejoyceth as a Gyant to run his courſe; From the ſhadow he riſeth to the Sun in the Firmament, and to a perfect underſtanding of his courſe in the Ecliptick, and then brings back again his underſtanding to the ſhadow, he makes thereby an inſtrument that ſhall deſign to the eye the daily circuits of its motion: his eye that gave occaſion to his mind to diſcover them in contemplation; and now his mind is impregnated with the light of knoſtledge, and returnes with uſury to the ſenſes that occaſional advantage which they afforded it, and gives them the pleaſure of the viewing of its practiſe; it gives the

the eye & hand directions for drawing of lines, which by the regular application of a ſtick, or wire, ſtone, or any other body, ſhall diſcover not only the diviſions of the day, the hours that are paſt, or to come, but even all the myſteries of the Suns motion: how it meaſures out the night, and in what quantity it diſpences out the the day: how near his approaches at noon, and how far diſtant he is from us at midnight; by what degrees he draws towards us, and by equal meaſures he retreates; how he riſeth from his greateſt Southern declination to the North, and from thence returnes again to his chambers in the South, having touched the boundaries that he cannot, he muſt not paſs; and how in this his continual progreſs he diſpenſes the ſeveral ſeaſons of the year, what time he enters into every ſign, when he begins to rejoyce the hearts of any of the nations by his preſence, and

what

what time he leaves them in the darkneſs: theſe are but ſome few and leſſe conſiderable of thoſe wonders which are performed by that which hath no being.

To inſiſt upon it, how the reaſon and wit of man hath found out ſeveral Arts and Sciences, from principles moſt contemptible, how it ariſeth to moſt admirable ſpeculations, and upon poor beginnings to what iſſues it brings; how it can give the height or diſtance to which it never can approach; how by the application of a piece of wood, or other matter to the eye, it can aſſign the diſtances, and places, and motion, and appearances of the ſtars of heaven, and foretel the poſitions and combinations of the Planets, the Eclipſes of the Sun and Moon to the generations to come: how it corrects the judgments of the ſences, and demonſtrates that to be far greater then the world, which the eye preſents

ſents no biggar than a buſhel, nay, no bigger than the rowel of a ſpur: to inſiſt upon ſuch things as theſe, were to be prodigal, and ſuperarrogate in proving the incorporeal nature of the ſouls of men, and yet all theſe are nothing to thoſe more ordinary things which it performs, when it aſſigns and preſcribes to it ſelf laws of mutual ſignification, by things which have no ſimilitude; when it deſigns notions to ſounds; and ſounds to letters, and upon hearing the voice *Soul*, or ſeeing the word *Man*, we call into our minds the things which I have ſpoken of him, things which cannot be performed by the colliſion of atoms, the motions or diſpoſitions of parts or quantities, but muſt be the iſſues of ſpiritual eſſence: ſuch therefore are the ſouls of men, and ſo they are immortal.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

An Application of the former Propositions to the inference of a Religion in general, and a proposal of the third in order to the Christian.

THE third thing which I propounded to speak of by way of preparation to the entertainment of the principles of our Religion, it was the authority of the holy Scriptures: that which we have already demonstrated was of a more general design, this comes to be more particular; that was against Atheism and Irreligion, this against superstition, and the false religions of the world, the will-worships of the Heathen & the Jews, and of a party of those that do profess the name of Christ. Out of what hath already been delivered a necessity of Religion in the general will result, for it is the first consequence of reason from the consideration of the attributes of God, and the condition and properties of the souls

souls of men, for having by neceſſary force of argument drawn up the vaſt number of mankind to one original cauſe, even to God as their Creatour, we cannot chuſe if we will inſiſt upon that conſideration, but fall upon a neceſſity of Religion. For if God have created man he muſt have done it for ſome end & purpoſe, ſeeing he is an intelligent agent; and ſuch agents as work with underſtanding, they always work upon deſign, & propound ſome good to themſelves in all their actions, for they cannot be ſuppoſed to work but upon deſire, and the object of deſire is only goodneſs; if now we employ all our wit & our invention to diſcover what good can accrue to the God-head by the Creation of man, we can find none that is imaginable in the way of profit or of gain: that which the Pſalmiſt hath laid down is a concluſion following from the light of reaſon, as well as from the ſpecial revelations of the holy

holy Scripture *that our goodneſs extendeth not to God*, and it was a queſtion, which might with good congruity fal from *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, Job. 22. 1. *Can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf? Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it any gain to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?* And the matter of gain being excluded from the end of God in our creation, if we run over all the objects of pleaſure, which come within the ſpheres of the ſouls of men, we ſhall find no pretence of reaſon for anything of ours to pleaſe the Almighty, and ſo to be aſſigned as an intelligible cauſe of our creation, ſave only the delight which the God-head might take in the communication of his goodneſs, in the explication or unfolding of thoſe glories, which lay enwrapped within it ſelf, in having ſomething (if I may ſo ſpeak) without, and beſides it ſelf, which

which might be apprehenſive of the excellencies of it, might be ſubject and conformed to it, and might perform towards it the acts of glorification and praiſe.

So then the glorifying of God is all the end that can be found out, why God ſhould ever have created us: and the next thought to this concluſion of our reaſon muſt be of the waies and meanes, whereby he may be glorified by us: and there again when we ſhall have run over all the waies imaginable, we can faſten upon none other than the admiration of his excellency, the adoration of his Majeſty, the obedience to his will. And theſe are the acts and performances of religion, ſo that the conſideration of the God-head and his Attributes do naturally caſt us upon a neceſſity of Religion.

Now as the conſideration of the God-head doth naturally enforce a Neceſſity of Religion, ſo doth likewiſe

likewiſe the conſideration of the Immortality of the ſoules of men: for if we ſhall but conſider, that our ſoules ſhal never fail of their exiſtence, but continue in being to all Eternity, we can hardly avoid the thoughts of the ſhortneſs of our duration in this world, or the compariſon of the time of our duration here, with that other continuance which doth abide for us hereafter: and if we will have the patience in our thoughts to inſiſt upon the proportion of a few years unto an unlimited and unmeaſurable Eternity, we ſhall unavoidably fall upon this judgment, that our condition here is no way comparable to that which ſhall be: that momentany pleaſure bears no proportion to eternal happineſs, or eternal miſery: that theſe *light afflictions which are but for a moment, are not to be compared either to the joys or miſeries which are to be expected*, and conſequently that our care for this life ought

ought not, nor cannot in common prudence equal our care of eternity. So then, whatsoever befalls us here, we shall conclude it requisite to provide that we be not miserable hereafter, and consequently, that we make our selves a friend of him that hath the issues of death in his power and moderates and dispenses the rewards of Eternity: but there is no way to have him propitious to us but by obedience, no reason to expect that he should satisfie our longing, or fulfill our will to all Eternity, unless we fulfil his will for our time of tryal in this life, and that is by the exercise of Religion only attainable. So that the consideration of the Souls Immortality will likewise enforce us to a necessity of Religion.

Thus far the common principles of natural reason will force us, even the first and most common principles of intelligence, such as are grounds of clear, evident, and perfect demonstration;

ſtration; ſo that it muſt be the Fool alone, as the Pſalmiſt, ſpeaks, which can be an Atheiſt, ſo that they are without excuſe whoever glorifie him not as God: thus far thoſe poor remains of light which yet are left to the corrupted off-ſpring of our degenerate Parent, will ſerve to lead us (to the general neceſſity of Religion:) but here indeed it leaves us deſtitute of the certain waies of pleaſing God: and conſequently deſtitute of clear and ſolid grounds of hope of attaining to eternal happineſs. And here it is that the Scoffers and irreligious men take occaſion to reaſon themſelves and others to deſtruction: ſeeing that nature hath here deſerted us, and left us no infallible Rules of particular waies of devotion, they contend that there are none ſuch, and conſequently that our Religion is vain, and uncertain, uncertain in the the iſſue, becauſe uncertain in the grounds and principles, and here

now

now against them we pretend, that wherein our natural light hath failed us, the mercy of God hath been pleased to supply us, that God hath not left us without a certain rule and Canon of Religion, not without a light shining to us in this dark place, particularly that he hath given to us his holy Word to be a Light to our feet, and a Lanthorn to our paths, and that the book of the holy Scriptures are that Word of God.

PART III.

Concerning the truth and Authority of our Scripture.

SECT. I.

Petitions and Cautions premiſed to the queſtion.

YOu will do me the favour to conſider, that our preſent controverſie is againſt thoſe that deny the Authority of the holy Scriptures, ſo that we cannot have the advantage of thoſe Arguments which in every other controverſie of Religion are the moſt valid: I mean Arguments drawn from the Authority of the Scriptures themſelves, which is the beſt, if not the only authentick rule of deciſion of ſuch

ſuch differences as do ariſe; ſuch as do indeed ariſe in the Church of God, who all do agree in a profeſſion of that faith, which is delivered in theſe holy Books, this I ſay they agree upon in theſe general terms, however with wonderful heat and diſtance they vary in their judgments whether or no ſome particulars be of the recommendation of the Scripture. It is then the common principle of Chriſtians, and the ultimate rule for the judgment of thoſe that are within: but as for them that are without the Church, they are likewiſe out of the juriſdiction of this Canon or Judge, and to give over their incrudelity (or rather infidelity) as ſome of our Divines have done, with this ill-interpreted axiom for rejecton, that they deny our principles, and ſo are not worthy to be diſputed with, or to refer them only to the αὐτόπιστα of the Scriptures, and to the Spirit working with the

reading and hearing of them, it might be to prove a ſcandal to them without; and to ſuch as are weak and wavering within, it were tacitely to imply, that we have no way to gain the queſtion, unleſs out of courteſie the adverſary be pleaſed to yeild it to us, to reſolve the motives of our Catholick Faith into private impulſes and particular dictates of the Spirit (arguments of very great credit and reputation due to our ſelves as particular favourites of the Holy Spirit, but ſuch as being deſerted by the tenor and regiment of our lives, render us diſhonorable to that holy Spirit whereto we pretend, whileſt in the apprehenſion of men we do at leaſt obliquely entitle it to ſuch actions as are inconſiſtent with it, profeſſing we hold our faith by private revelation, and conſequently have our underſtandings taken up by the holy Ghoſt at ſuch time as our wills are guilty of enormous ſins.) A fancy that

that is the mother of diverſe prodigies lately broken into the Church, as that God ſees no ſin in believers, that Murther, Adultery, Inceſt, Sacriledge, (any thing) may be committed, and that theſe are no ſins in believers, for thus they argue, that they which have the holy Spirit are free from ſin, ſuch as do believe the Goſpel they have the holy Spirit, becauſe there is no other motive ſufficient beſides a private illumination, ſo then they cannot be guilty of ſin, but yet they may, and do commit ſuch things as thoſe we mentioned; wherefore thoſe are no ſins. Thus doth Satan transform himſelf into an Angel of light, and acts his Tragedies in the likeneſſe of the holy Spirit: Nay we ſay, and do believe that the Divels *alſo believe and tremble*, that the Kingdom of heaven is like a net which drew to ſhore fiſh of all ſorts, ſome to be put into veſſels, and others to be thrown

thrown away. We ſay and do acknowledge to the glory of God, that the internal light of the holy Scriptures is ſufficient to make the man of God perfect to ſalvation, and that in ſome it is the means of generating faith in men, but that the moſt of thoſe believers who have the happines to be trained up from their infancy in any part of the Chriſtian Church, by obſerving the eſteem which in their Church is had of thoſe holy Books, they do betimes upon the reputation of their Church receive them with a kind of veneration, that upon this motive they receive the faith; and that others do upon other inducements entertain it; and once for all we ſay, that beſides the ſecret and free illuminations of the holy Spirit, theſe want not arguments to enforce the reaſon of unbyaſſed men to entertain the Scripture as the Word of God, and that all ſuch as without the engagement of perverſe

perverse affections shall admit those Arguments in their apprehensions must necessarily be of that belief.

Before I betake my self to the proof of this assertion, I must premise, that by the books of the holy Scripture, I mean such books of the old and new Testament as in the Church of *England* have been accounted Canonical, and that I intend not here to take up the controversie which is betwixt the Church of *Rome*, and us, concerning the Books which are Apocryphal, the drift of my discourse being against those who believe too little, and not those who believe too much.

Secondly, I must premise, that we are not here to expect the necessity of demonstrations, but must content our selves with such arguments as the nature of our subject will admit: there can be no true and perfect demonstration, unless the property to be demonstrated do naturally

rally flow from the ſubject of the demonſtration. In matters then depending upon the free election of cauſes, there cannot poſſibly be any perfect demonſtration, and ſuch is the giving of a rule of life in reſpect of God, ſo that there cannot be a perfect demonſtration of it. So then we muſt content our ſelves with arguments falling ſhort of the neceſſity of demonſtration, but ſuch as no man ſhall be able to deny, without denying ſome ſuch principles as all men do acknowledge to be true.

SECT. II.

The Aſſertion reſolved into two Propoſitions, the former undertaken, that whoſoever believes the Hiſtorical part of the Scripture muſt believe the Doctrinal.

TO believe that theſe Books of Scripture are the Word of God, there

there are very great and important reasons.

2. To disbelieve it, there are no reasons, or not any sufficient reasons.

And first of all, to prove that those books of Scriptures are the Word of God, it is sufficient if we prove the truth of them, because themselves pretend to be of divine inspiration. All Scripture is of divine inspiration, the tenour of the Old Tastament runs generally thus, *The Lord spake unto Moses, or other of the Prophets*, such as were the Penmen of the holy Scripture: Indeed the general pretence of those that wrote both Tastaments, is, that holy men did speak and write, as they were inspired by the holy Ghost, so then, if this pretence of them be true, it must be true, that it proceeded from the holy Ghost, and consequently to prove the truth of it will be sufficient to conclude that it is the word of God.

Now

Now as concerning the truth of those writings we have 1. the same Arguments, or as great, as for the truth of any writings in the world. Nay 2. we have arguments (moral Arguments) to evince the truth of them, such as no other writings can pretend to. That we may shorten what we have to perform, you may consider that the things delivered to us in the holy Scriptures are either matters of History, or Doctrine; and that these are frequently interwoven in the Scripture, so as when S. *Matthew* doth in an historical narration bring in our Saviour preaching in the Mount, and delivering there a summary of his doctrine; So that it will appear, that if the historical part of the Scripture be undoubtedly true, there cannot rationally be any doubt made of those doctrinal rules and precepts which there are delivered. As for the doctrine of any party whatsoever concerning God, there is not

not imaginable any argument so ready to evince the truth of it, as God himself, freely attesting to the deliverers of it by mighty signs and wonders, by great and undeniable miracles, such as are instances of the immediate hand of God; such as by skilful & knowing men are acknowledged to be no way performable by the præstigiatory art of Magicians, or by the power of evil Spirits. Such were the miracles which are delivered to us by *Moses* all along the course of Gods bringing the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt* to his own land; and those afterwards wrought by the Prophets. And such were the works of our blessed Saviour all along the course of his Ministry before his passion, and such and more admirable was his resurrection and ascension. Whosoever doth believe, that there was such a *man* as *Moses*, that this man *Moses* did professe himself to have received from God

God a law, which was to be delivered to a people, he may hitherto very well doubt, whether or no he was not deceived, in imagining that he had received such a law. But if withal he shall be assured or stedfastly believe, that this man *Moses*, to make good his pretences to Gods revelations, could obtain so much of God, (as to the eyes and senses of millions of gainsayers and opposers of what he did deliver) to shew great and palpable miracles: whosoever doth believe that he did turn a rod into a serpent, and that back again into a rod; that by stretching forth that rod upon the river *Nilus* he turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish: how afterwards he brought frogs upon all the land of *Egypt*, even into their Kings chambers; how he brought flies, and Caterpillars, and lice, and thunder, and lightning, and mighty hail-stones; how he brought botches and murrain amongst men

and

and cattel; how he brought upon all the land of *Egypt* a darkneſs that might be felt, and ſlew their firſt-born; afterwards how he devided the Red Sea for the people to paſſe through it, and when he had ſerved the turn of his party, how the flouds returned and overwhelmed his enemies; he that ſhall believe that after this he brought water out of the rock, ſweetned the waters of *Marah*, brought Quails into the wilderneſs, procured Manna to fall about their tents all the week, and none upon the Sabbath; how the fire from Heaven conſumed *Nadab* and *Abihu*, only for adventuring to offer ſtrange fire, otherwiſe than he had preſcribed them: that the earth opened and ſwallowed up *Korah*, and covered the congregation of *Abiram*; that at the time of the promulgation of his Laws, God himſelf appeared viſibly, that the glory of his preſence overſhadowed the Mount, how there were

were thunder and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the Mount, *Exod.* 19. how Mount *Sinai* was altogether on a ſmoak, becauſe the Lord deſcended upon it in fire, and the ſmoak thereof aſcended as the ſmoak of a furnace, and the whole mountain ſhaked exceedingly. Whoſoever believes theſe works to have been done by the ſame party that profeſſed a revelation from God, cannot avoid the belief of his profeſſion, unleſs he can believe, that God by ſo great miracles would atteſt to Blaſphemy and Sacrilegious impoſtures, a thing which is palpably mad to be believed, and is againſt the light of common ſenſe and reaſon.

So likewiſe whoſoever doth believe that in the daies of *Auguſtus Cæſar* there was ſuch a man as *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, commonly called Chriſt, and that this man did profeſs himſelf to be the Son of God, and pretended to deliver all the world a way of Religion,

ligion, a Covenant of life eternal, an abrogation of the ceremonies of the former law, and those other things which he professed, there is no necessity that he should believe, that either he was the Son of God, or that his doctrine was infallible. But if together with these professions he shall take into belief those things which Jesus did, though for his own sake he see no reason to believe him, yet at least he will believe for the works sake, if he shall believe that God himself did attest to those professions, he wil likewise believe those professions of his to have been true, and Gods attestation he will believe, if he shall believe that a little before his birth a company of Angels appeared to Shepherds, and told them of it; that presently after it a Star appeared to wise men in the East, and conducted them to the place of his Nativity: that in his life time he did such works as never man did: how he

he turned water into wine, commanded the winds and the sea: how he cured all manner of diseases with his Word, how he gave sight to such as were born blind, which was never known since the world began; how he cured most obstinate diseases of long continuance meerly by the touching of his garment: how he cast out devils from such as were possessed: how he raised up the dead to life, and every way demonstrated the power and presence of the God-head; how at the time of his crucifixion the frame of nature seemed to be dissolved; how the vail of the Temple rent, and the graves opened, & many bodies of the dead, which slept, arose & came into the holy city, and appeared to many; how there was darkness over all the earth, the Sun eclipsed at the time of the Jewish passeover, when the Moon was at the full, and lastly how after three daies he arose again, appeared several

ral times to his Apoſtles, gave them power to perform the miracles which he had done, and viſibly aſcended up into Heaven: Whoſoever doth believe theſe matters of fact, muſt of neceſſity believe the doctrines which he delivered, unleſs he will accuſe God of bearing falſ witneſs, or own ſome ſuch other deteſtable and odious incongruity.

You ſee then, how the matters of fact being cleared, and the hiſtorical narrations being aſſerted to be true, the doctrinal parts will follow of their own accord: and that if we can clear ſuch things to have been performed by *Moſes*, and *Jeſus of Nazareth*, and that ſuch doctrines were delivered by them; it followes, that thoſe doctrines are true, and are the Word of God.

SECT. III.

The kinds and degrees of the causes of Historical Faith in general.

IT remains therefore, that we make it appear, that the sacred Histories are true, and that no man, pretending to reason, can justly refuse to admit that principle into his belief; there being

1. The same reasons to believe those Histories, that there are to believe any Histories.
2. More reason to believe them than any other.

First then, Whosoever doth deliberate with himself, about that question, whether or no he should give credit to any History propounded, can possibly find no other considerations to sway his judgment, than such, as either are taken from the thing it self, that is delivered, or from the

the persons which have delivered the relation, and from such qualifications of them as upon the grounds of reason he can discover. If the matter it self do involve a clear and evident contradiction to some natural principle, it is not the asseveration of all the men of the world that can work a belief in the understanding: it not being in the power of man to entertain a belief contrary to his knowledg, although it may produce in him a doubting, whether or no he have not suffered any fallacy to be imposed upon him, and so he may be wrought to run over the matter again unto himself, and follow it with strict and wary attention backwards and forwards in reference to his principles.

But if the thing it self be not incredible, however difficulter strange it be, that which then he doth consider is, the qualities of the relators, and the manner of the relation, and

there is not any improbability proceeding from the difficulty or the rarity of the accidends, which may not be outweighed by the known disposition and properties of the Relators.

Those things which men do consider in the Relators of things, in order to yeelding their belief, they refer either to

the { Understanding or Will } of the Relators

and cõcern either their { Sufficiency or Integrity.

Men usually consider whether or no the things be such as may be certainly and evidently known; and whether these parties had sufficient means to come to the certain knowledge of them, and whether they contain themselves in their relations within the bounds of things liable to certain knowledge: Thus then those things

things wch may be certainly known they are the outward events of things whereas the secret causes may lie concealed: the former are such as are the objects of common sense, and come within the cognizance of all: the latter are such as are indiscoverable by any man, they being oftentimes made up of a complection of actions and dispositions of multitudes of men, or things perfectly to be known only of him that sees all things *in speculo æternitatis*.

If the History (or Relation) contain it self within the bounds of evidence and certainty, the next thing to be considered is, whether or no the party that is Author of the Relation had sufficient means of knowledg; whether himself were an eye or ear witness of the thing which he relare; or whether the things were so publickly acted and known, that he might certainly, and particularly inform himself, without any danger of deceit. If

If the party be of known ability, both in himself, and in reference to the things, the next question will be of his Integrity, and whether there be sufficient reason to believe, that he would not voluntary deliver a falshood, instead of truth, and because it is not reason to believe that men would lie, unless they either be known to be corrupt, or some end be visible of gain to them from their lying. Men use to consider these things likewise before they settle upon belief.

These are the grounds, and considerations, and inward discourses whereupon men do proceed to the receiving of historical belief, even of any relations whatsoever; and accordingly as all of these conditions be clear or obscure, doubtful or certain, such is the strength of mens belief; if all of them concur, there remains no reason at all of doubting: if some of them fail, there will follow

low a debility, answerable in the belief; seeing that the belief of the conclusion can never exceed the force and evidence of the premisses.

That there is, or lately hath been such a City as *Rome*, or *Hierusalem*, or *Paris*, there are none of us that doubt, although we have not seen them; because they are things very easily known, as being the objects of the eyes; because the reporters have been there to see them, and because no end or reason can be imagined why, or how men should combine to abuse those that have not travelled.

That there have been formerly such Cities as *Corinth*, and *Philippi*, and *Lacedemon*, &c. we make even as little doubt as of the former, because the things in their nature are evidently to be known, & they have all of them been mentioned in the Books of *Polybius* or *Plutarch*, or a multitude of Historians that knew them.

That

That the History of *Cæsar*'s war against the *Gaules* is true, though written by himself, it is believed, because of his ability to know, and because it makes not things appear to be strained in his behalf, because it might have been contradicted, if it had been otherwise, and because he is delivered to us in the complexion of Histories, as a man of honour, that would not write a lie.

That the Histories of *Salust* are true, it is believed, because he wrote of things done within the compass of his time, whereof he might well inform himself, he was man of knowledg, and could not gain by any thing that he hath delivered, if it were untrue.

That all of these Histories were writen by those that bear the name of them, there is hardly any man that doubts, because there is no improbability in reason: they have been constantly so recieved in the world,

and

and mentioned successively in Authors following one another from their several generations down to ours.

We see the various degrees of qualifications (some of them) upon which we build an historical belief, that this belief comes short of the clearness of our assent to a Mathematical demonstration is evident; because there is an absolute impossibility that things should be otherwise, (there being a contradiction involved in the very terms, and *in adjecto*) but here is no impossibility but only an exceeding difficulty which makes up (not indeed a Mathematical, but) a moral impossibility; it is possible that all men may combine together to say, that they have seen such things as they have not seen, because every man is a lyar: but how they should come to do it, or to what end, is so invisible and inconceivable, that the matter, taken

ken in the groſs, is altogether incredible. It is abſolutely poſſible that all thoſe writings which we receive as delivered down from ancient times, may have been of late deviſed by ſome men to abuſe the world, and put upon other names: but to what end any man ſhould take the pains, and how they ſhould fit them with circumſtances, and make them all depend upon each other, in a conſtant ſucceſſion, agreeing in the mention of perſons, places, and actions, is a thing ſo difficult to conceive, as that it would argue madneſs to believe it, and conclude him to want the uſe of reaſon, that ſhould reject the light of all antiquity.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

An Application of those general grounds to the History of the New Testament, and a proof of this Assertion, That there is as great reason to believe the New Testament, as to believe any History in the world.

SUch madness then, and no less it were to reject the Histories of the holy Scriptures; no less madness: Nay it is much greater, and that not only because they are of more concernment to us then the acts of men of former times, but even because of the advantages of the delivering of those Histories. We will begin with those of the New Testament.

And here first, The Books of the New Testament were written by those whose Names they bear; the four

four Gospels were written by the four Evangelists, and the Acts of the Apostles were written by Saint *Luke*, &c.

Now that these Books were written by these men, it is impossible affirmatively to demonstrate; all that can be said is, That there is as great evidence of it, as of any other writing in the world; that by whatsoever argument it can be made appear, that any Books have been written by those who are reputed for their Authors in antiquity, (that the works of *Homer*, or *Plato*, or *Aristotle*, or *Tully*, are theirs) by the same it may be made evident, that these have proceeded from our Authors.

Have they been successively delivered? so have these: have they been continually mentioned under those names? so have these: have they been acknowledged by all parties? so have these; those that in the primitive times did oppose the doctrine of

Christ

Christ, yet did it not under the pretence that their Books were spurious, neither Jews nor Pagans had the impudence to make that objection. *Julian* the Apostate doth freely acknowledg (*Cyrill.* 10.) that the Books which by the Christians were received under the names of *Peter*, *Paul*, *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, &c. they were the writings of those Authors.

It is true, that there are some Books received of the Canon of the New Testament, whose Authors are unknown, as the Epistle to the Hebrews, and some others: but concerning them I hope to speak in answering those objections which are made against the Scripture. In the mean time we may justly assume it for granted, that those whereof no question hath been made in ancient times, are the writings of those to whom they are ascribed.

And now this being supposed, which cannot with any pretence of reason

reaſon be denied, it follows clearly that the things they have related are to be believed: for firſt, the things which they have delivered they were matters eaſily to be known; in reſpect of the things themſelves, they were matters of fact, and ſpeeches performed by our Saviour, or by themſelves: Secondly, the acts were acted publickly in the face of the world, and the ſpeeches which they deliver as ſpoken by others, they were for the moſt part ſpoken publickly, either in the Synagogue, or in the Temple, or to the multitude ſomewhere gathered together, on a mountain, by the ſea ſide, in publick places: ſo as they might have eaſily been contradicted, if they ſhould have delivered a falſhood: Thirdly, the parties which have delivered them had all the opportunities in the world to know the truth of things: they were things done either by themſelves, or within their own

ſight

ſight; of hearing for the greateſt part; or at leaſtwiſe in the times and places where the reporters lived.

Matthew and *John*, the two Evangeliſts which wrote the Hiſtory of Chriſt, they were two of his Diſciples: two that were intimately acquainted with his actions, and his words, more familiar with him than the reſt; the one was the diſciple that *Jeſus* loved, and uſed to lean on his boſome, as they lay at meat; the other was uſually taken with him, when moſt of the reſt were left behind; and hence it follows, that they themſelves were preſent at almoſt all the acts, and ſpeeches which they have delivered.

Mark and *Luke*, the other two Evangeliſts, they lived in the ſame territories, at the ſame time, where, and when our bleſſed Saviour beſtowed his converſation; and moreover S. *Mark* was (as 'tis very probable) firſt a Diſciple of S. *Paul*, who was

was miraculously chosen to deliver the doctrine of Christ: Afterwards he was undoubtedly a Disciple and companion of S. *Peter*, who was an Apostle of our Saviour, did live familiarly together with him, was present at almost all things which *Mark* hath written: and besides whatever is delivered by S. *Mark*, is to be found in the writings of the Apostles. *Luke* was an individual companion of *Paul*, and so he might learn of him such things as he delivered; besides that he saith, that he spoke with those that were eye witnesses of the things which he delivered, he was born near hand, he travelled through *Palestina*, might converse with those very men, upon whom *Jesus* had wrought his miracles, such as had seen the Life of *Jesus*, his Death, and Resurrection.

The *Acts of the Apostles* were likewise written by S. *Luke*; and that Book contains some things done by the

the reſt of the Apoſtles; but the moſt of it is concerning the actions of *Paul* after his miraculous converſion: the former it was eaſie for him to know, either from the Apoſtles themſelves or others: of the latter he could not be ignorant, becauſe ye was continually with *Paul* in all his labours and his journeys, even from the time of his converſion to his impriſonment at *Rome*.

As for the matters of fact which are delivered in the Epiſtles of *Paul*, and *Peter*, and *James*, and *John*, and *Jude*, they are ſuch, as either were done by themſelves, and ſo they could not poſſiby be ignorant of them, or by others with whom they held a correſpondence, or by our Saviour, whoſe Apoſtles the were, all but *Paul*; or elſe they are things done by others, publickly and notoriouſly known.

Laſtly, As for the Epiſtles to the *Hebrews* and the *Revelations*,

though the Authors of them be not certainly known in the Church, yet thus much is plain, that the Author to the *Hebrews* saith, that the Gospel of Jesus was preached first by Christ, and confirmed unto him (Us) by them that heard him, 2. v. 3. and so that he could not be ignorant of that; nor yet was it possible that the Author of the *Revelations* should be ignorant, whether or no he had those Visions which he hath delivered.

Now these are all the Books of the New Testament, and it appears, that the Authors of them had as much opportunity to know the things which were delivered, as is possible to be had, wherefore the business is clear in respect of their Sufficiency of knowledge; and all the Question which remains, it must be in regard of their *Integrity*.

Whosoever challengeth or questions the Integrity of an Historian, and upon

upon that cauſe refuſeth to receive his Teſtimony, it is requiſite that he produce the reaſons of his ſuſpition, that he charge the Authors of corruption, and prove the charge which he hath objected; or that he diſcover and manifeſt the ends, which he might propound to himſelf, as the reward of his impoſture; that he ſhew the gain that might accrue, or the loſs, or peril, or ignominy that he might avoid; and manifeſt that his accuſation hath not proceeded from malice, but from judgment, from ſome grounds of reaſon, and not from perverſneſs, or ſpight, or any inhumanity. Here then it is that we challenge men or devils to produce the crimes, to detect and prove the villanies of theſe Writers; nay to aſſign the ends which they might have in relating falſhood, the gain, the pleaſure, the glory, the ſafety, or whatſoever it is that prevails upon the appetites and luſts

of men: and let their infidelity and jealousie out-do the malice of the grand Apostate. Indeed I think it scorn to stand upon this argument, (it was the contemplation of these things chiefly that gained from me that second assertion, That there is greater reason to believe the Scripture than any other writings in the world) the first Proposition being already demonstrated, *That we have as great.*

SECT. V.

That there is much greater reason to believe the History of the New *Testament than any other History.*

HAving already demonstrated, that considering the qualifications of the persons who have recorded unto us the New Testament of our Saviour, there is as great reason to give credence to their Histories, as to

to any other antient Histories in the world, by reason of their means of knowledg,& opportunities for discovery of the truth of those matters of fact which they have delivered: It follows now that we make good that, which in the second place we propounded concerning them, which was, That we have greater reason to believe them, then to believe any Histories whatsoever, and this now will be manifest to us by these Arguments following.

1. Greater obligation.
2. Their sufferings.
3. Their Miracles.
4. Their predictions.

First then, They were more powerfully obliged to the delivery of the truth than others, not that others were not obliged likewise to deliver nothing but the truth: there is in the conscience of every soul setled a principle dictating unto him, that he ought

ought not to recede from the truth in his relation; but yet this principle is in the most of men, much over clouded & overborn; as is manifest, not only by the fabulous relations of antient Histories, even after the institution of the Olympiads; but by that inclination which we find, almost in all men, to make their relations handsome; in order whereunto even the gravest of them, *Josephus*, *Livy*, and the rest of those orders of Historians, have often changed the form of Circumstances, and varied from the truth, to make a coherence of things according to their fancy, such as might please their own imaginatiõs.

The truth is, that which held in the Heathen, so far as they were held within the boundaries of truth, it can be conceived to be no other than a certain magnanimity, and a moral generosity, that was actuated and quickned in them by the conceit of a reputation, thereby gained amongst the

the people of their own generation, and their hopes of perpetuating their own fame, together with the acts which they recorded, and consecrating them to eternity and immortality; I do not say, that this was all the motive which they had, but that upon the consideration of them, in the whole complexion of their circumstances, I cannot find out any more powerful motive, nor any stronger obligation.

But besides all that these men had to move them, the writers of the N. Testament had likewise other motives, as far beyond these, as the heaven is beyond the earth, either in dignity, or situation: A most severe injunction of their Master, such as they themselves have delivered, such as they could not, neither durst neglect: their writings abound in precepts of truth and of veracity, and that prescribed under far other conditions, and setled upon a far surer foun-

ſoundation, upon the foundation of truth it ſelf, the original and the Ideal truth of the world; and propounded to them under far other penalties: they knew full well, and taught to others, that of every idle word, which men ſhall ſpeak, an account muſt be given at the day of judgment: how dreadful an account then muſt they have expected if they ſhould have delivered falſhohd in the place of truth, if they ſhould have told a lye for God, or lyes of God, or delivered impoſtures in the name of God? nay verily, the neceſſity which lay upon them, compared to others, doth as far exceed it: as the fear of a little diſ-reputation is exceeded by the horror of eternal torments: and now their practiſe was alſo anſwerable to their obligation, and what they delivered, in their ſpeeches and writings, was fully exampled in their lives. We have before intimated, that whoſoever will

charge

charge an Author with a lye, he must either detect the lewdness and corruption of their lives, or at leastwise manifest what they might gain by their report; the former could never be by their sworn enemies detected, nay *Julian* the great Apostate could charge them with nothing but simplicity: now then, all the gain that may be, is recucible

to the { Avoidance of evil, and Obtaining of good.

The Goods that are to be obtain'd are either of { Body. Estate. Liberty. Reputation.

First then, What outward evil did they thereby escape, that so they may be judged to have lyed out of fear? consider the state of the world at that time & tell us, whether or no there was danger in speaking, & writing those things, or in the forbearance?

Did

Did the Roman Emperors, or the Governours of *Judea*, or the Jews, or the Presidents of the adjacent Provinces, or the multitude, threaten them to make them speak, or to be silent? Did they by that means put themselves into a condition of ease, pleasure, and soft luxury? Did they treasure up gold and silver, & raise themselves a fortune by it? Had they a greater freedom inward or outward? did it let them into larger principles, or procure thē greater scope to gratifie their inordinate desires? Was it the way to advance them to honor & reputation, either with the Governours, or with the people? nay instead of bodily ease and pleasure, it subjected them to pains { active, and passive. They were forced to undertake labours, and travels, and watchings, and the inconveniences of great and painful industry: they were daily exposed

expoſed to hunger and thirſt, and cold and nakedneſs; nay, to torments and to death: inſtead of gaining an eſtate, they were enforced to forſake all that they had, to live an ambulatory kind of life, without any certain being, depending as it were on the Ravens, to provide thē their meat from one day to another. Inſtead of that ſame freedom and liberty which men affect, they entred into a ſtraighter and more narrow way, than the way of the world, they were forced to deny themſelves even ſuch things as they knew were lawful, & they were abridged even of the common enjoyments of mankind, not ſuffered to converſe with freedom, or to breath with ſafety: they no ſooner came to a city, but there they were perſecuted and forced to fly unto another. That which S. *Paul* ſpoke of himſelf, as he was making his laſt voyage up to *Jeruſalem*, might have been the common

Motto

Motto of them all, Now I go bound in the Spirit up to *Jeruſalem*, not knowing what things ſhall befal me, only the H. Ghoſt that teſtifies in every city, that bonds and afflictions abide me there.

As for the matter of honor and reputation, that was all in the hands of their enemies, the Jews, and the Greeks: they preached Chriſt crucified, to the Jews a ſtumbling block, to the Greeks fooliſhneſs, and all the credit which they obtained at their hand was, to qe accounted a company of ſilly men, contentious for a thing of nothing, a queſtion about Names, about one Jeſus which was dead, whom they affirmed to be alive; this was the opinion of the Gentiles: and by the Jew they were looked upon as revolters, and ſo not fit to live: as for this ſect we know that it is everywhere ſpoken againſt, and they were hereby rendred the ſcorn and deriſion of the world, the off-

off-scouring of the people: what shal I more say? they were deprived of all the enjoyments of the world, & cast into all the miseries, or in the words of the Author to the Hebrews, *They wandred about in sheep-skins & goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; and all for the delivery of the things contained in those books*: and if we sadly consider it, we can assign no cause of this their choice, but the force of truth prevailing in them, & the urging of their conscience, by the continual instigation of them by that spirit which acted them, making their hearts hot, and kindling a fire within them, a fire in their bosome, which they could not suppress: (*We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*) they suffered for their profession that never men did; and so we have greater reason to belive them than any other men.

And we have still greatest arguments then these, because that God himself

himself gave testimony to their words and writings; and that both in their own times, and the times which did succeed them: in their own times by Miracles; in the succeeding generations by accomplishing their predictions.

The Apostles then, in confirmation of their doctrine, were endowed with a miraculous power from on high, & manifested to all the world that they had received in great abundance their portions of the spirit from him, that had the spirit not by measure: they preached, & as they preached, they confirmed their doctrine by mighty signs and wonders, and evident demonstrations of the H. Ghost, so evident, that when they had delivered the relation of them to a gain-saying, a crooked and perverse generation, assigning the times and places and other circumstances their spighful enemies could never detect them of the least impo-

sture;

ſture; but were forced (though their teeth gnaſhed while they ſpake) to confeſs, that indeed great miracles were done by them; that whis was evident, & they were not able to deny it; nay, ſuch was the evidence of the miracles performed by them, that ſome of them have been recorded in the Annals of heathen Authors (*Phlegon*) that they were appealed unto by the Primitive Chriſtians (in the times next ſucceeding the Apoſtles) in all their Apologies for the Chriſtian faith. In their Apologies made to the heathen Emperors they are appealed to as things commonly known by the world, yeilded without contradiction, which could not with any fore-head be denied; they were, I ſay, appealed unto, and that to the greateſt enemies of the Chriſtians, and that by way of challenge to the trial, and that without any reply as to the falſhood of them: nay, which is yet much more, there were

not

not only by these men themselves, but even at their Sepulchers, when they were dead, great miracles performed for divers centuries of years, and that so certainly, that it was confessed by the forest enemies of the Church, such I mean, as were of the School of *Pythagoras*, that by Magick Arts strove to out-do the performances of Christ, particularly by that mad Dog *Porphyrius* and others. Unless then men will deny God the honor due unto him, and make him by his presence, and testimony authorize imposture, there can be no scruple made of the truth of these mens writings, but they must be believed before the writings of any others in the world, unless they likewise could have done such acts as these have done; unless they could have cast out devils by their words, have given the H. Ghost by the Imposition of their hands: unless they could have healed all manner of diseases

diſeaſes, the blind, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, &c. by words, touch, ſhadow: or could have ſpoke all ſorts of Languages, or rather at one ſpeaking could have brought to paſs, that men of every Language ſhould perfectly have underſtood their ſpeech, as if it had been their own: *Parthians*, and *Medes*, and *Elamites*, and the dwellers in *Meſopotamia*, and *Judea*, and *Cappadocia*, *Pontus* and *Aſia*, *Phrygia* and *Pamphilia*, *Egypt*, and the parts of *Lybia* about *Cyrene*, ſtrangers of *Rome*, *Jews* and *Proſelytes*, *Cretes* and *Arabians*, they all heard them ſpeak in their own Tongues.

Nor did it pleaſe the Lord of the Spirits of all fleſh, here to ſtint the diſpenſations of the holy Spirit to them; he gave them not only the power of Miracles, but the Spirit of Propheſie; he unfolded to them the everlaſting Rols, and admitted them into his Decrees, & would not hide

from them the things, which he meant to bring to pass, in the generations to come: he urged them by his holy Spirit, and they foretold the fates of the world; they foretold it, and God brought it to pass. I cannot stand to reckon up all their Prophesies which they delivered, and shortly after they were fulfilled; Of the spreading of that leaven; of the growth of that grain of mustard-seed; of the mighty and wonderful propagation of the Faith, and the perpetual enduring of it; of the rejection of it by the *Jews*, and the receiving of it by the *Gentiles*; of the hatred of the *Jews*, and the torments which were to be undergone by the glorious Martyrs; of the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the calamities of that faithless Nation: all these make it evident, that God was with them; that there is infinitely more reason to believe the Writers of the New Testament than any other Writers.

That

That none can diſbelieve them, without forfeiting his Reaſon, by aſſerting, that God would give teſtimony to impoſture.

SECT. VI.

That the Old Teſtament is the Word of God. A Propoſal of three aſſertions, whereby it is concluded.

HAving demonſtrated that the Books of the New Teſtament are all of them to be received under the authority and credit of the word of God; that the dogmatical parts are to be received upon the credit of the Hiſtories, and the Hiſtories upon the common principles of Reaſon; and conſequently, that no man profeſſing to be guided by reaſon and judgment can refuſe them. It remains, that we demonſtrate the ſame of the Old Teſtament, and that we

take off those colours, and answer those Sophisms, which by some men are urged against the Scripture, and so conclude this Argument.

Before I proceed to the former of these, I must call to your remembrance that, which in the beginning I did premise, that under the Title of the Books of the Old Testament, I did comprehend those, and those only, which in the Church of *England* have been admitted under the name of the Books of the Canonical Scripture; and that I had no purpose at all to meddle with the controversies which are betwixt us and the Roman Church, about the Books which are Apocryphal: the Reason why the Church hath entertained them only into the Canon, is, because they only were of the Canon of the Jews belief, before the coming of our Saviour; they only being written in the Hebrew Tongue, and consigned by *Esdras* at the return of the Jews from the

the Babyloniſh captivity, as is generally believed amongſt the Jewiſh Rabbins, whilſt the Prophets *Haggi*, *Zechary*, and *Malachy* were yet alive.

Now although the way to demonſtrate the truth of them, conſidering the queſtion apart, and by it ſelf, be the ſame with the way, whereby we did demonſtrate the truth of the New Teſtament, by aſſerting the Authors of them to have been thoſe men to whom they were evermore aſcribed; and from the qualities of the things delivered (in matter of Hiſtory) and the characters of thoſe perſons, who have delivered the ſeveral parts of it, to demonſtrate, that no reaſon can be imagined, why ſuch men, as thoſe are, and muſt be ſuppoſed to be, ſhould deliver ſuch impoſtures as thoſe muſt be, ſuppoſing them to be impoſtures; that no end or motive can be diſcovered, which they ſhould propound to themſelves for their reward, but on

the contrary, that many reaſons are viſible, why they ſhould have held their peace, if they durſt have concealed thoſe things from the world; the reaſons from ſafety, gain, glory, and the like, as might either joyntly or ſeverally be demonſtrated, of even all the Books of the Law, and of the Prophets, which make up the greateſt part (*Moſes* together with the Law having delivered likewiſe the ſhame of himſelf, and *Miriam*, and *Aaron*: The Prophets having been all, or moſt of them, hardly uſed; *Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers perſecuted?*) Although, I ſay, this had been the natural way to demonſtrate the matter in queſtion, taken ſingly and apart by it ſelf; yet partly to avoid the ſimilitude of matter, which renders unpleaſant even the moſt profitable diſcourſes, and partly to make a preſent diſpatch of this Argument, I ſhall content my ſelf to have put you

thus

thus in mind, that all those general arguments, for the truth and credit of those writers, are common to these as well as to the others; and that there needs no variation of them, being to be applied to the question now in hand, any other than the interchanging of their several names, their personal relations and qualities, and other accidents: In a word, that the kinds of the arguments are the same, and the force of reason alike in both, allowing only the difference of gradual and individual circumstances.

This being premised, the sum of what I shall further say, is briefly this: That 1. in the time of our Saviour and the Apostles, these Books were true. 2. That since that time they have not been changed.

From which two Propositions it will follow, that still they are so; and consequently, that the Books of the Old Testament, as well as of

the New, are the Word of God.

As touching these Propositions, the truth of them will be inferred by this ratiocination.

1. The Books, which we now receive, are the same which the Jews do now receive.

2. The Books, which the Jews now receive, are the same which they did formerly receive, even up to the consignation of their Canon.

3. The Books, which then they did receive, were true.

SECT. VII.

The first Assertion proved, That the Books of the Old Testament, which we now receive, are the same which the Jews do now receive.

THat those Canonical Books, which we receive, are the self-same with those which the Jews at the

the preſent do receive, is a caſe ſo plain, that it needs no manner of proof, but only this, that it is obvious to every man to compare our Engliſh or Latin Bibles with the Hebrew Bibles, which are uſed amongſt the Jews at preſent, and daily put forth by the preſent Rabbins, reſiding in the ſeveral parts and dominions of the world; and upon ſuch a compariſon it will be found, that we do own the ſelf-ſame Books which they do, without any difference in the number or inſcriptions, chapters or verſes of thoſe Books: ſuch as do doubt of this, they muſt take the pains to try, and to reſolve themſelves by their own experience; or elſe if they are not able, or not willing to take the pains to make themſelves their own reſolvers, they muſt of neceſſity believe the multitude of thoſe, that have already tried it, and finding it to be generally granted, and allowed of all men, and all parties,

parties, however differing otherwiſe amongſt themſelves, they muſt upon that account either believe the Propoſition, or elſe deviſe ſome way how, and for what end it ſhould be brought to paſs, that the Learned men of all Nations, and Religions, Jews, Chriſtians, Papiſts, Proteſtants, Turks, Pagans, *&c.* ſhould agree together to impoſe upon that part of People, that cannot or will not fit themſelves, to reſolve a queſtion ſo eaſie and of ſuch concernment.

Now, that all theſe ſorts of men do thus agree, muſt likewiſe be believed, until ſome one inſtance can be produced to the contrary: the truth is, the thing being a matter liable to the trial of common ſenſe, and obvious to all the world, there is no more controverſie made of it among the Learned, then of a principle in Mathematicks.

It is true indeed, that as concerning the interpretation of thoſe Books there

there is, and almoſt ever was a great deal of controverſie amongſt the Learned, (but none as to the number, and to the parts of thoſe that are delivered amongſt the Jews) and it is likewiſe true, that the belief of far the greateſt number of Chriſtians, doth in its kind depend upon the queſtionable fidelity of Tranſlators; and that fidelity of theirs, if it be to be tried, that muſt be done by means which are not exempt from queſtion: all therefore which can be ſaid in this matter, is, that unleſs we can attain to ſkill ſufficient for our own ſatisfaction in this queſtion, we take into thought the qualifications of Tranſlators, in reſpect of ſkill and of fidelity, and impartially that we conſider all thoſe rational heads and grounds, whereon men uſe to ſettle their belief, amongſt which no greater evidence can be expected, than there is in caſes where all agree; and ſuch is the main body of ours, and

other

other Translations likewise. This that I have spoken of Translations, is indeed a digression from the Proposition I should demonstrate, seeing when we speak of the sacred Authority of the holy Scriptures, we mean it not of Translations, as they are such, but primarily of the Originals, and of Translations only so far as they are consonant to those Originals. And thus much is indeed sufficient both for the assertion and explication of that Proposition, That the Books which we receive, they are the same which the Jews receive.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

That the Books, which the Jews do now receive, are the same which they have received ever since the Consignation of their Canon.

BUt secondly, the Books which the Jews do now receive, they are the same which they did formerly receive, upwards to the time of our Saviour and his Apostles; nay, beyond them, to the very time of the Consignation, or sealing up the Canon of their Belief; that is, their Books were never changed nor corrupted.

It is not here my purpose to assert, that never any letter or word hath been changed, or formerly read otherwise than now it is in the Jewish Bibles, (I am not so far unacquainted with their *Keri* and *Chetib*, or with the notes of the *Massoreth*) but that there hath not been made any vari-

variation so considerable, as to shake the Authority of the present Copies. Of these various readings, I hope to speak in the answering objections: in the interim, I am to demonstrate, that they have not received any considerable depravation.

And now this being a negative Proposition, common reason doth presently offer it to every ones judgment, that it cannot be positively proved; the very nature of such Propositions contradicting that manner of proof: the arguments then, which are producible, are some of them taken from the causes why they could not morally be corrupted; the other from signs, that *de facto* they have not been so.

The first Argument then is taken from the multitude of Copies, which it was impossible to combine together to corrupt upon design, or that they should accidentally agree together in the same casual corruptions.

It

It is certainly apparent out of the Histories of the Jews, that after their first and second Captivities, they did store themselves with multitudes of Copies of the sacred Books, and that both publickly and privately; that which before they were dispersed, either was not so necessary to them, or else was not so apprehended by them. So long as the first Temple was yet unrazed, we read but of very few (if any) Synagogues of the Jews in other Nations, out of the bounds and territories of *Judea*; but after, by their long and woful Captivity, when their confidence in the protection of their Law and their Temple had by their sad experience and woful sufferings, worn it self out of their minds, their Temple being utterly demolished, the best of them began to think, that it was possible that even the Law might fail: (*Habakkuk*) and they now bethought themselves of making use of the rational means of

of the preſervation of it in the minds of men; and ſeeing there could not be any readier way thought upon than the erecting of Synagogues, and writing many Copies, theſe were the courſes which they took; (they had had experience of the inconvenience of having one onely Copy, in the loſs of that Copy, which being found again by *Hilkiah* the Prieſt, made King *Joſiah* to rend his clothes, at the hearing of thoſe things written in the Law) and accordingly we find, before the coming of our Saviour, many Synagogues erected, in foreign places, and the Books of the Law and the Prophets in every Synagogue, read every Sabbath-day; now every diſperſion encreaſed the number of Synagogues and Books. And beſides the firſt captivity of the Tribes carried into *Media* by the Aſſyrians, we ſhall find them, even after they had licence from *Cyrus* to return, continuing ſtill abroad,

abroad, and upon many new occasions again dispersed: those that read over sacred Histories and prophane, shall find them seated in most of the Eastern Countries adjacent *Judea*, or not far distant from thence: the *Macedonians* invited them to *Alexandria*, the Cruelties of *Antiochus*, the Civil Wars of the *Asmonæi*, the Armies of *Pompey* and *Sossius*, drove many of them from their habitations; the Cities of *Cyrene*, of *Asia*, *Macedonia* and *Lycaonia*, the Islands of *Cyprus* and *Crete*, and divers others, even *Rome* it self, they were all of them furnished with Temples and Synagogues of the Jews: Now so it is, that the Books of all these did agree together amongst themselves; which they could not have done, if any, and not all of them should have been corrupted; and that all of them should either casually, or by design, be corrupted,

(beſides, that no end can appear to encourage ſuch a deſign) the thing it ſelf makes it impoſſible.

Beſides, had any ſuch thing been, they muſt, to make a correſpondence, have corrupted likewiſe the Septuagint Tranſlation, which for almoſt three hundred years before our Saviour was extant in *Egypt*; that I ſpeak nothing of the *Chaldee Paraphraſe*, extant before the time of our bleſſed Saviour: So then, as far as the nature of a moral ſubject will admit, we have ſhewed, as from the cauſes, that the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament could not be corrupted.

Now as from the ſigns, we have likewiſe powerful Arguments, that to our Saviour's time they were uncorrupted; becauſe our Saviour never diſcovers any corruption of the Text, which certainly he would not have ſpared, at ſuch times as he

he taxeth the Scribes and Pharisees of making the Law of God of none effect, by their Tradition.

Now, that the Hebrew Canon hath not been corrupted since our Saviour's time, we have this sign likewise, that never any of the ancient Fathers have, in their greatest heat of zeal against the Jews, accused them of such corruption, though *Justin Martyr* complain of wronging the Septuagints Translation; and certainly if they should have corrupted them upon design, either before or since, it would have been in all those places which conclude against them for Christ, (the true Messiah, that stumbling stone, upon which they stumbled and fell:) but those do remain unaltered.

The truth is, to them were committed the Oracles of God; and they have, by the visible ordination of the providence of God, discovered so much care and diligence that

x Edwards in vol: of the trut[illegible] thorly of the H: [illegible] this assertion [illegible] great mistake. vide p: 55.

way, as is not to be found to have been bestowed upon any other Writings under Heaven: witness the Critical Notes of their *Massoreth*, which gives an account of the numbers of Letters in every Book almost, and almost, if not altogether, of every various Lection. I conclude then that they have never been corrupted.

SECT. IX.

That in our Saviour's time these Books were true, and consequently were the Word of God.

BUt in our Saviour's time they were true, and the Word of God, as appears by our Saviour's testimony, and the testimony of the Apostles, who still refer to them, as being of Divine inspiration, as being the truth and Word of God; their using the testimony almost of every

every particular Book, as authentical, their Diſputations founded upon their Authority. Particulars in this kind are ſo many, and ſo plain, that without any more ſpeaking, I will conclude, that we are to receive the Old Teſtament upon the credit of the New; and the New Teſtament (as I have formerly demonſtrated) upon greater reaſon far than any other Writings in the World; and conſequently, that we muſt receive the Books of the Old Teſtament upon the ſame Authority.

We have already diſcovered ſome of thoſe many reaſons, whereupon we are to receive the Books of the Old Teſtament and the New, under the credit and authority of the Word of God. Beſides thoſe whereupon I have inſiſted, there are many more: ſome of them taken from the quality of the Writers, ſome from the manner of the Writings; the former

ſhewing that thoſe men, from whom they proceeded, were not fit perſons to deviſe ſuch things, they being many, if not moſt of them, ſimple and unlearned men; the latter manifeſting, that ſuch things are not, of their nature, obvious to be deviſed, becauſe they tranſcend the wit and invention of man; the majeſty and ſimplicity of the ſtyle, the concord and harmony, the end and ſcope, the power and efficacy, the antiquity, beſides the teſtimony of the Spirit in the hearts of men.

But the evidence of truth no way depending upon the multitude of Arguments or Reaſons, and all of theſe being inſiſted on in ſome or other of thoſe Authors which are obvious, I ſhall at this time finiſh what remains of that, which at the firſt I propounded, which was to ſhew, That as there are many and important Reaſons, moving wiſe men to receive them, ſo there neither are,

nor

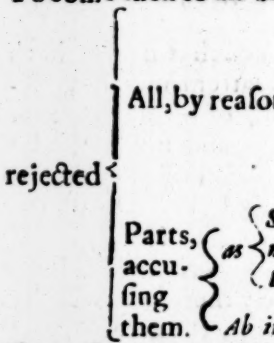
nor can be any ſufficient Arguments on the contrary, to make men to refuſe them.

SECT. X.

That there is no reaſon to diſbelieve the Scriptures. Objections briefly propoſed and anſwered: firſt, general Objections againſt the whole.

'Tis true indeed that many, both of old and latter times, have refuſed either all, or ſeveral parts of the holy Canon; and it is not to be hoped or expected, that they ſhould ever be generally received by all the World: there muſt be Hereſies, and amongſt the reſt there alwaies have been, and ſurely there ever will be Anti-ſcripturians; the greateſt part of the World have ever lived according to ſenſe and appetite: And to prove that *de facto* it is denied, is not to manifeſt that there is no reaſon why it is ſo; yet ſeeing there are

of those Disputing and Theoretical Hereticks, as well as Practical, to conceal or dissemble the Arguments which are alleadged against the truth, it would be to betray the cause that we have undertaken, and give occasion for some Jealousie, that their Objections are unanswerable. To come then to an issue, some have



(from the matter of them.)

Those who refuse the whole Scriptures, they are some of them Atheists; others professe themselves Christians, and yet do deny the authority of

of the written word, pretending to private and ſecret illuminations, as the laſt rule of their actions: the deſign of my diſcourſe being againſt the former, I ſhall only intimate the frenzy of the latter. They pretend, that that which we call the written *Word*, is not the *Word* of God: becauſe

1. The Word of God, is God himſelf.

2. Chriſt is the Word of God.

3. The Letter kills.

4. The Word of God is Spirit and Life.

Theſe are the Arguments, which by ſome Enthuſiaſts are uſed againſt the written Letter. And for anſwer to them, we may only obſerve, how by arguing againſt the Authority of the Scriptures, theſe men do tacitely aſſert it; for taking their arguments out of it, and proceeding no further, either by reaſon or revelation, to the diſcovery of their antecedents, but barely reſting in the recital of thoſe words

words which are there written, they do reſolve all the power and force of their argument into the authority of thoſe very writings which they would impugn, and conſequently they do at once deny and grant the Authority of the Scripture; which is to deſerve the Epithete, which is given them, of Fanatical Enthuſiaſts.

That the Word of God, is God himſelf, (taking the Word of God for the Immanent Act of the Divine underſtanding) is indeed a truth attainable by other principles, by thoſe I mean, from whence the abſolute ſimplicity of the Divine nature is attainable. But that Chriſt is the eternal Word of the Father, and that there is ſuch a Spirit and Life, as the Argument doth imply, & that there is a Divine and Myſtical meaning of that Letter of the Word, they either own their Faith unto that Word, or elſe they have not done very charitably

bly in concealing those waies whereby they come to know it; and very improvidently, in giving occasion for us to believe, that their pretences of illumination, are but pretences.

Now or that other Party, who do reject the Scriptures (the whole bulk of them) their Arguments are these:

1. Because they deliver things impossible, and consequently incredible, and so they are not to be believed.

2. Because they deliver things repugnant, and contradictory to one another.

3. Because the Books of the Old Testament are doubtful, by reason of the differences of the Text and Margin: And the Books of the New Testament are likewise uncertain, by reason of the various readings of several Copies.

1. Those things which the Atheistical Party use to object against the au-

authority of the Scripture as impoſſible and incredible, they are the miracles performed by *Moſes* and the Prophets, by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, but if we ſhall attentively conſider them, we ſhall find, that they do include in them no contradiction, nor any abſolute impoſſibility of the performance: the utmoſt that can be juſtly concluded from them, is, that they tranſcend the ordinary courſe of the diſpenſation of that providence, which orders the World, and adminiſters the Laws of the government thereof. But upon the hearing or reading of extraordinary events, preſently (though they have been ſufficiently atteſted) to miſbelieve them, upon conceit of reaſon to the contrary, diſcovers palpably the want of the exerciſe of that reaſon, whereto they ſo much pretend: for a man to deny ſuch matters of fact, as he is not able to comprehend the reaſon of, muſt either ſuppoſe the party

party to know the causes of appearances in Nature, or conclude him guilty of childish and ridiculous incredulity. We have before demonstrated the Omniscience and the Omnipotence of the Divinity; and that being (as hath been actually proved) clearly and evidently demonstrable, for the contemptible wit and reasoning of man to prescribe limits and bounds to that power and knowledg, is no less, then to own the acknowledgment of a contradiction, by professing that to be limited and finite, which the natural principles of our understanding will force us to acknowledg of necessity, to be immense and infinite.

It cannot be thought a thing impossible, that God should either raise the dead, or command the Sun to stand still in *Gibeon*, by him that considers, what it is to be the original of life, or to have created the Universe with the word of his eternal power,

the

the things which are impossible with men, they are possible with God: and consequently we having before concluded the vanity and madness of Atheism, shall need to say no more, to evince the frivolous weakness of this Argument, from the impossibilities.

2. As for those repugnances and contradictions, which some men vainly please themselves, with imagining they have found them in the Scripture, if they be well examined, they will be proved to be but so many instances of the weakness, or inadvertency of the Objectors: those which have been made against the Old Testament, have long ago been found by *Rabbi Moses ben Maimoni* not to have taken in all those conditions, which have been by Philosophers discovered to be required to make up a perfect contradiction: that is, that contrary assertions be made of the same thing, at the same time, according to the same part or notion,

or

or apprehenſion: and the ſame hath been lately performed by *Manaſſeth ben Iſrael*, in his *Conciliator* for the Old Teſtament. It hath likewiſe for the New, been long ſince performed by many of the Fathers; and of late by divers of all Profeſſions, Papiſts, Proteſtants, and their ſeveral ſubdiviſions. The matters of Doctrine are eaſily reconciled by diſtinguiſhing the notions of ſeveral terms; ſo for example, as faith is ſaid by *Paul* to juſtifie, and works by *James*, by diſtinguiſhing of Juſtification; and the matters of Hiſtory are reconciled by attending to times and places, perſons and forms of ſpeech. Thus are the differences cleared, which are about the Genealogies of our Saviour delivered by S. *Matthew* and S. *Luke*. The truth is, there could never any conſiderable difference, either in matter of Doctrine or Hiſtory, be urged againſt the Scriptures; yet if ſome ſlight and inconſiderable circum-

cumstances should seem to us so to differ, that we could not reconcile them, it ought rather to confirm our belief, than any way to shake it; seeing it is the custom of those who design to impose upon mens belief, so to contrive all circumstances, as they may be sure to have no difference discovered.

Such is, in truth, the agreement and harmony of all these Authors, so distant in time, in place, in institution, as is not to be found in any other Authors in the world, though of the same sect, either in Philosophy, Law, or Physick, or any other faculty; not yet in any one man with himself; as might be manifested, if either this time or place required it. And so instead of an Objection to shake us, we have found an Argument to confirm us.

3. The third Argument or Objection against the whole Books of Scripture, is taken from the *Keri* and *Chetib*

tib of the Old Testament; and from the various readings of the New; from those they conclude them to be doubtfull, from these corrupted

Now the former of these is answered by the Jewish RR *Isaac Iacob* of old *Elias Levita* of latter times, who do deny the consequence of that argument, and make it manifest, that those were added for signification of some mystery, and not because the Text was doubtfull: and for proof of their assertion they prove, that the Books of *Haggai*, *Zachary*, *Malachy*, *Daniel*, and *Ezra*, had those marginall notes added to them by their authours, who all were members of the *Synagoga magna*, and made the consignation of the Jewish Canon: these could not be doubtfull of the sence of their own writings; and consequently from those marginall notes, the doubtfulnesse of the Old Testament can no way justly be concluded.

As touching the various readings

of some places of the New Testament, we cannot deny but that through the failings of some Scribes, there are found in the most ancient copies of those books some differences of letters, or some few syllables, or words; but this we deny, that those are sufficient from whence to conclude the books not to be credited: for upon the same reason it will be concluded, that no Book in the world is to be credited, unless they can be manifested to be exempted from the slips and failings of transcribers. Nay the consideration of those various readings, are very strong arguments that the substance of the writings are incorrupted, and that they were never changed upon design, seeing the differences that are do no way infer any difference, either in the Doctrine or History of the Testament: it was of the favour and mercy of God to preserve to his Church those various readings, that by comparing

paring them together, and likewise with the rest of the holy Scriptures, both the true sence and the true reading of them might at once be manifested.

SECT. XI.

Objections against particular parts briefly proposed and answered.

NOw Objections against particular books of either Testament, will be found likewise inconsiderable: 'tis true, that many of them have been either doubted of or rejected by some men, but those who have pertinaciously refused them, have done it rather out of the interest of their passions and corrupt affections, then out of Judgment. Briefly.

Ecclesiastes hath been rejected by some.

as { Written by *Solomō* in his dotage / Placing felicity in sences.

But the first of these can no way be proved

proved; nay, the contrary appears by the whole tenour of it well considered; (it being a ſpecimen of the greateſt and moſt vigerous wiſedome of any of the Sons of men) and the latter is evidently confuted by the concluſion, *Fear God and*, &c. *for God ſhall bring* &c.

The *Canticles* have been taken for a Love-ſong compiled in a complement of *Pharaohs* daughter; but it had been but a ſlender complement to tell her, that her eyes were like fiſh-pools, and her noſe like the tower of *Lebanon* that looketh toward *Damaſcus*.

The Prophecy of *Daniel* hath been charged by *Porphyrius*, to have been a Hiſtory written after the things were done, written in the time of *Antiochus*, and impoſed upon the world under the credit of the name of *Daniel*: but, beſide the teſtimony of our Saviour, it appears out of Hiſtory, that that Prophecy was ſhewed to

Alexander

Alexander the great, in his advance towards *Ierusalem* 150. years before *Antiochus*. *Ioseph*:

New Testament

Hebrews was rejected by the Latine Church, because the Authour was unknown and because of some passages especially seeming to favour the Novatian heresie: I answer.

1 It is not the name of an author which gives credit to his Writings, but that character of his persō which is drawn from his abilities and integrity. Now these were never doubted of in that Authour,

2. Those passages are very well to be understood otherwise, then in favour of the Novatians.

2. It was ever received in the Greek Church, and recited amongst the Canonicall Books by the Councels of *Nice*, *Laodicea*, and *Carthage*.

4 If we are to believe the Western Church had grounds to doubt of the credit of it, at such time as it did not admit it, we may as well be-

lieve that that Church had reaſons which ſatisfied them of the authority of it, at ſuch time as they did receive it.

The Epiſtles of Saint *James*, 2d of St. *Peter*, the ſecond and third of Saint *Iohn*, *Iude*, *Revelations*, have all of them been doubted of, for ſome time, by ſome parties, whether or no they were in deed written by thoſe authors, under whoſe names they are now received: but though they were ſome time doubted by ſome, they were alwaies received by others; and thoſe Churches which did refuſe them ſo long as they were unſatisfied, are to be ſuppoſed to have been ſatisfied, when they did receive them; and ſo we ought to give as great, if not greater credit to them, then to ſuch others as had not been queſtioned, inaſmuch as that which hath been deliberated, and debated and then decided, is to be credited, as well as that

that which silently hath passed on unquestioned.

And now I have with brevity (as I suppose) congruous to such an Essay, as I intended, made evident the last assertion which I undertook, That to disbelieve either the whole body of Scripture, or any part of it, there is no reason; or not any sufficient reason.

Θεῷ δόξα.